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Wednesday, 27 October 1993
at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112 *(continued)*

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.12)

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the first speaker in the debate for this meeting, the representative of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. HEINE (Marshall Islands): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of those members of the South Pacific Forum that are also Members of the United Nations, namely, Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

At the Summit Meeting of the Security Council held last year leaders of many of the world's largest and most powerful nations declared that international drug trafficking represented one of the most serious non-military threats to international security. They placed the problem in the same category as the grave threat of poverty. Unlike poverty, however, the problem of drug trafficking is not concentrated in either developed or developing countries but impacts on all nations of the global community. It is essential, therefore, that nations work together for solutions.

The experience of the Pacific area reflects the global nature of the international drug trafficking problem. Although we in the Pacific islands have been spared the most dramatic images resulting from trafficking in illicit narcotics such as crack houses, coca fields and narco-terrorism, the sad reality is that we are neither immune to nor isolated from this scourge. Today large quantities of illicit narcotics find their way even to our most remote islands. Tragically, our youth are being introduced to substances about which they have little information. Often they are not aware of the potentially deadly effects of these narcotics.

A number of our nations are composed of many small islands spread over vast areas of ocean. Some, such as the Federated States of Micronesia, span an area almost as large as the continental United States. These geographic features, combined with the growing importance of the Pacific region as a shipping lane between Asia and the West present an attractive avenue for international drug traffickers.

Naturally, the Governments of our region are committed to stopping all illicit drug shipments from ever reaching our shores. However, our region's limited financial, technological and human resources hamper our ability to deal with this problem. Notwithstanding the will of our Governments, we suspect that these limitations have often resulted in shipments passing through the region undetected.

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Our Governments commend the successes enjoyed in other regions of the world in the effort to address the problem. We have observed nations with highly advanced technologies and sound economies taking direct measures - with some success - to eradicate the trade in illicit narcotics and its associated activities, such as money laundering. Ironically, successes in other regions may have a negative effect on the Pacific islands, as effective measures elsewhere cause drug traffickers to look for new fields of operation. To these international criminals the Pacific region, with its resource limitations, represents fertile ground for their grim trade.

It is essential that our nations ensure an effective exchange of information, both within the region and intraregionally. Increased technical and financial assistance to improve monitoring and interdiction in the small island countries of the Pacific is especially needed.

Although the problem of drug consumption in the Pacific has not reached the extreme that it has elsewhere, it threatens to do so in the future.

Domestic drug-abuse problems are increasing in our societies as illicit drugs become more widely available. Education is the key to preventing this menace from devastating Pacific island societies. Drug traffickers often prey on an ignorance of the consequences of drug use. Because of the historic isolation of Pacific islanders from the problem, the level of drug abuse education today is struggling to keep up with the rapid pace of the threat from illicit narcotics. With the help of the international community, effective programmes to raise awareness of the dangers of drug abuse can be incorporated into formal education curricula at all levels.

Our region has a well-developed framework that has been utilized in the fight against illicit narcotic trafficking, the laundering of funds generated by these activities, and in the area of mutual judicial assistance generally. Specialist bodies under the South Pacific Forum, such as the Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting (PILOM), the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC), and the Customs Heads of Administration Regional Meeting (CHARM) are all working in the field. The South Pacific Commission is also making a growing impact on the areas of demand reduction and prevention via its health and education programmes. All these institutions have the capacity to deliver additional, well-targeted and culturally relevant drug-control programmes to the island States of the South Pacific if additional resources can be made available to them.

In this context, we have noted with appreciation the report of the UNDCP mission to the Pacific in November and December 1992. The report's conclusions, which recommend some specifically targeted programmes for the most seriously affected countries, as well as use of the existing regional infrastructure to deliver some region-based programmes in the areas of demand reduction and prevention and of interdiction and law enforcement, strike us as appropriate and timely.

We welcome the decision of the UNDCP to implement some of the conclusions, and we would encourage the Programme to continue implementation of the additional recommendations as resources permit.

Clearly, all nations - large and small - have a direct interest in combating drug trafficking. International agencies play an essential role in assisting nations in their efforts. We welcome the heightened attention being given by the United Nations to drug-control activities, and we commend the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. We welcome all initiatives aimed at increasing coordination between United Nations agencies, and we look forward to the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the consolidation of United Nations drug-control activities. This report is to be submitted to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 1995.

The allocation of these plenary meetings of the General Assembly for a high-level discussion of the topic makes possible a continued and fruitful exchange of views. We fully endorse this year's General Assembly draft resolution on measures to strengthen international cooperation in drug control, and we look forward to its adoption by consensus.

Finally, our Governments pledge their continued commitment to full cooperation with members of the international community to combat the problem of international drug trafficking and associated activities. We call on all States to join us in abiding by commitments and in acting responsibly on this issue.

The PRESIDENT: I now call the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. KHOSHROO (Islamic Republic of Iran): As it approaches the fourth year of its Decade against Drug Abuse, the United Nations, which is the forum best suited to the purpose, has convened to examine the status of international cooperation in this field. The success of the various responses to the challenges posed by the widespread drug menace will depend primarily on States' political will, which is the vital element of this sacred struggle.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that drug abuse has become one of the world's most serious and widespread problems, threatening the human race and destroying economic and social organizations steadily and at an ever-increasing pace.

In view of the increase in the volume and misuse of narcotics in various countries, on the one hand, and of the advanced weaponry and the sophisticated distribution and smuggling networks among narcotics dealers, on the other hand, international instruments, such as anti-drug conventions - especially the Convention of 1988 - must be given serious priority by States. It is particularly important to emphasize the need for full application of paragraph 6 of article 3 of that Convention in order to deter drug-related offenses.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a party to the 1961 and 1988 Conventions, continues to take all possible steps, at the national, regional and international levels, to promote and implement the recommendations of the Global Programme of Action. We believe that the adverse consequences of the illicit production and sale of, demand for, traffic in and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances threaten the lives of millions equally in the developing and in the developed countries. To prevent and limit the destabilizing effects of drug misuse, we must pay special attention to the areas known as the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, as well as to the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

South-West Asia is one of the world's leading areas of narcotics production. Owing to its geographical location and - more important - to political developments there in recent years, this is a highly sensitive region. With an annual output of 3,000 to 3,500 tons, South-West Asia is a major producer and supplier of drugs at the international level. A considerable percentage of this output is smuggled into the Islamic Republic of Iran, from which it is transported to European markets.

Poppy cultivation and drug production were permanently eradicated in the first year following victory in Iran's Islamic revolution, and there is now no drug cultivation or production of any kind in the country. However, Iran is located on a major drug-smuggling route. In view of the special, determining conditions in the region, as well as the extensive efforts at the national level, many sessions and exercises in bilateral and multilateral cooperation involving various countries of the region, for the purpose of securing effective measures to resolve problems relating to drugs, have been held in Tehran.

Among the most significant sessions, the following are worth highlighting: the twenty-eighth session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, in July 1991; the ministerial-level Conference at the twenty-ninth session of that Subcommittee, in October 1992; the meeting of the Group of Experts of the Eighth Committee of the Economic Cooperation Organization, in April 1992. In addition, a meeting of heads of national drug-law-enforcement agencies in Central Asia and the Middle East is scheduled to be held in Tehran next April.

Following the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan, another memorandum of understanding - between Iran, Pakistan and UNDCP - will be finalized soon.

Representatives of several countries and international organizations have observed the operations and witnessed the measures undertaken by the Islamic Republic of Iran in its battle against drugs in recent years. Almost all these groups have praised such plans and measures. The UNDCP group visited the eastern border of the Islamic Republic of Iran in July 1991 and, following a thorough inspection, filed a report, from which I should like to quote one paragraph:

> "Based on its observations, the Mission would venture to estimate that, as a developing country, Iran is very close to, if not at, the top, in terms of per capita investment in anti-narcotic efforts."

In spite of the continuing demands of its first and second five-year socio-economic programmes, the Islamic Republic of Iran has embarked on a very costly campaign to block the drug flow by initiating rigorous security countermeasures along its borders. Although we are fully aware of the fact that the final destination of the drugs is Europe, we continue to make every effort to fulfil our moral and political commitment to the international community. The fact is that the vital issue of controlling the influx of drugs into Iran is a common responsibility and, as such, must be shared by all countries and bodies concerned.

As this distinguished gathering addresses the issue of international cooperation against drug abuse, I must regretfully point out that Iran's current countermeasures to curtail the inflow of drugs into and through Iranian territory to Europe - measures requiring considerable financial investment - have been a one-sided effort, in that Iran has not had the practical cooperation of other countries or of the relevant international agencies. In view of Iran's present economic situation, I must indicate explicitly that, in the absence of adequate technical and financial assistance for Iran and its neighbours, continuation of those costly measures would create serious problems.

The comprehensive implementation of anti-drug measures such as the Global Programme of Action (GPA) and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) necessitates in-depth analysis, updated priorities and a long-term pragmatic approach. In order to achieve practical results, it is particularly necessary to deal equally at the regional and country levels. Thus, the review of the implementation of the GPA and SWAP, as well as the consideration and evaluation of recommendations and activities presented in documents A/48/286 and A/48/329, must adhere to a set of objective standards, including the importance of the geographical location of a country; its political will to eradicate drug abuse; its budget devoted to anti-drug activities; the existence of a comprehensive legal system to counter drug problems; the application of socio-economic remedial measures; its success to date in controlling narcotic drugs; involvement in regional and subregional cooperation; and the extent of cooperation with concerned United Nations bodies. Setting such standards constitutes an appropriate framework for UNDCP and responsible countries to assist technically and financially the front-line States in their struggle against the drug menace.

In this connection, we are encouraged by the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the resolution entitled "Tehran Declaration", on the subject of that Declaration, which encourages States to enter into arrangements similar to the Declaration in order to take appropriate action to combat drug abuse. The Declaration also proposed the establishment of a regional bureau of UNDCP in south-west Asia. Its establishment would enable UNDCP to ensure the smooth implementation and effective monitoring of programmes in south-west and central Asia and facilitate and promote cooperation between countries in the region and organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as international and financial institutions.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating my Government's firm commitment to participate in all regional and international cooperation aimed at eliminating the drug scourge from society at large.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to inform the Assembly that I have received a letter dated 26 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, requesting that the Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the Observer of the Holy See during this debate.

Members will recall that, in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly, observer non-Member States may normally make statements only in the Main Committees. However, following consultations, and taking into account the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly take a decision to hear the Observer of the Holy See in the course of the debate in plenary meeting on this important issue.

May I take it that there is no objection to this proposal?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Canada.

Mrs. FRECHETTE (Canada) *(interpretation from French)*: It is with a great deal of interest that Canada addresses the Assembly on the subject of international control of narcotics, an issue that requires constant vigilance on the part of the international community.

Because of its nature, this problem requires especially vigorous international cooperation. We are very pleased to note that this cooperation is growing stronger and more effective on all fronts. The number of delegations on the list of speakers demonstrates the importance attached to the issue of illegal narcotic substances. We firmly believe that only by effective joint action will we be able to bring to an end the scourges of narcotics consumption and abuse. Global international cooperation, with the participation of every nation, supported by a strong national will, is the key to success.

We must take advantage of these special meetings of the General Assembly to continue our effort to reduce the demand for drugs and put an end to drug trafficking. This is an excellent opportunity to review the cooperative mechanisms established to achieve these goals. A draft resolution to be presented on the initiative of the Mexican delegation contains many positive elements that we support wholeheartedly. The Government of Mexico should be proud of its initiative.

We are convinced that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) must take the lead in coordinating international projects. It is important to ensure that the UNDCP's programmes are well planned and well managed. We must remember that they cannot all be implemented at once. That should be borne in mind when evaluating the results.

Allow me quickly to summarize the measures that have been taken in Canada. The Canadian anti-drug strategy was established in 1987, with an initial budget of 210 million Canadian dollars, originally for five years; that period was extended for another five years in 1992. The strategy was carefully designed to reduce both supply and demand. Some 65 per cent of the resources allocated for this strategy are used for demand reduction, while the other third goes to Police and Customs programmes to combat drug trafficking.

Our approach encompasses the entire population of Canada and covers a wide range of activities and substances: alcohol abuse, overconsumption of medicines, doping in sports, inhalation of toxic vapours, the consumption and production of cannabis and the consumption of cocaine, heroin and other drugs. This multifaceted programme has required the participation of numerous Federal government departments. Through our cooperative efforts, we have obtained some very satisfying results. However, we cannot become complacent in our success, and we are keenly aware that much remains to be done.

(spoke in English)

Canada also cooperates fully with its international partners. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police work with their foreign counterparts, providing courses and seminars. The Customs section of our federal Revenue Department works with its Caribbean colleagues on the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council. Canada also takes part in the Financial Action Task Force to counteract the laundering of illicit profits.

Canada has played an active part in various multilateral organizations to achieve the objectives of the Global Programme of Action. We have provided voluntary funds to the UNDCP and to the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, attached to the Organization of American States.

We salute the considerable efforts made by some countries to reduce supply. However, we do not feel that such efforts can be effective unless accompanied by demand-reduction efforts. Dealing with demand strikes at the root of the problem and is, we feel, far more effective in the long run. In addition, an appropriate legal environment, free of corruption, supported by a strong political will, is essential to combating drug trafficking. Reducing the demand for drugs is also achieved through programmes of education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. A society must provide alternatives in order to minimize the attraction of drugs.

We know that there is no easy solution to drug abuse and its attendant problems. These problems are so much a part of the social fabric that only a long-term, multifaceted approach will produce solid results. Canada is firmly committed to this struggle and intends to continue cooperating actively at the international level.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Australia.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): It is a sorry fact that in the last decade of the twentieth century virtually all nations are threatened by the use of and trade in illicit narcotic drugs. This threatens the lives of human beings, the fabric of societies and, in some cases, the very security of the State itself. We are all affected by this dreadful reality, and so it is right that the international community should address together the problems of the production, trafficking in and consumption of illicit narcotic drugs. In this context, it was very important that in its Summit communiqué of 31 January 1992 the Security Council embraced the concept of major non-military threats to security, and identified among those threats the illicit drugs trade.

It is three and a half years since the Assembly addressed the illicit drugs issue at its seventeenth special session, in February 1990. It is time that we do so again, because such sessions provide an opportunity for us to take stock of United Nations efforts to curb the illicit drugs threat, to exchange relevant national views and experience and then to determine, together, what needs to be done in the future.

There have been a number of important developments since the seventeenth special session. Undoubtedly the most important has been the establishment of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

charged with the exclusive responsibility for coordinating and providing leadership for all United Nations drug control activities. The Programme came into being on 1 March 1991, and while that was only a short time ago Australia believes that UNDCP has made a very impressive beginning to meeting the challenge. The United Nations now has a focal point for its illicit drug control efforts and an organization with the necessary status to provide effective leadership to that effort. So Australia compliments the Executive Director of UNDCP and his dedicated staff on their achievements and reiterates its high-level political commitment to and continued support for and cooperation with UNDCP and the United Nations system in the fight against the proliferation of illicit drugs.

The United Nations already has an impressive array of policy instruments at its disposal - the Global Programme of Action, adopted at the seventeenth special session, the System-Wide Action Plan and the international drug Conventions. These constitute an impressive framework guiding the efforts of the Organization and Governments in their fight against the threat posed by illicit drugs. The critical challenges at this stage are to fill in the policy gaps and to fill out the detail and, where necessary, to breathe life into that framework. The UNDCP has already undertaken important work in this regard.

From our perspective, the critical areas which require further emphasis are the development of additional detailed operational blueprints to implement UNDCP's regional and subregional strategies; greater emphasis on the development of balanced national drug control plans; and support for UNDCP's effort to encourage the evolution of comprehensive alternative development strategies for those countries most seriously affected by the scourge of illicit narcotics.

Australia recognizes the need for other United Nations organs to support UNDCP in the development and implementation of comprehensive alternative development strategies, particularly for the most seriously affected countries. We urge all organizations contributing to the System-Wide Action Plan to give the highest possible priority to their contribution to the international drug control effort.

The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Global Programme of Action (A/48/286) is the major background document for our work during these meetings. The Global Programme of Action, together with the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, should guide Government action at the international, regional and national levels. The report, based on the responses of Member States, makes a large number of recommendations for future action, and all of them warrant careful study.

But we would note, in particular, the need for States to reaffirm the higher priority given to drug-prevention and drug-reduction programmes and to encourage the mobilization of public support, including support from non-governmental organizations, in the development and execution of such programmes; the need for flexibility in the development of appropriate treatment and rehabilitation programmes, particularly in the face of the AIDS pandemic; the need for States to draw up master plans defining their priorities and objectives and to determine the steps to be taken in implementing their national drug-control strategies; the need for States to work to promote regional and subregional cooperation in forging effective strategies to contain the threat posed by illicit narcotics; and the need for Governments to work in the governing bodies of all the relevant specialized agencies and international financial institutions involved in providing technical assistance to ensure that the illicit drugs dimension is taken fully into account in programming decisions.

As the Global Programme of Action makes clear, responsibility for developing an effective national narcotics control strategy lies with Member States. Therefore, in seeking to identify sticking points impeding more effective action we should not overlook the critical ingredient, namely, the political will of Member States to implement existing policy arrangements. Indeed, it is greater political will and additional resources, rather than more policy documents, that will make the difference between success and failure in the years ahead.

As part of its contribution to this debate and action, Australia is distributing today to all delegations a copy of its National Drug Strategic Plan for 1993-1997. We believe this Plan is a practical example of the link between national activity and international drug control objectives within the context of the United Nations Global Programme of Action. We believe it is a practical illustration of the implementation of a comprehensive demand reduction and prevention programme, as part of a balanced national strategic plan of the sort advocated by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-sixth session. We believe this Plan provides us with an effective framework to mobilize all relevant sections of the Australian community to work to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the harm caused by illicit drugs. While it remains difficult to measure results precisely, we will rigorously evaluate our performance against the detailed objectives of this Plan.

In this initial phase, we willingly share the fruit of our efforts with other delegations as a contribution to the enhancement of international cooperation in this field.

I should also like to announce at this time that, in order to underline the importance Australia attaches to enhanced regional cooperation and the development of balanced national drug control strategies, Australia will host a regional conference on drug abuse in February 1994. The primary objectives of that conference will be to assist countries in Asia and the Pacific region to identify the principles and steps necessary to develop balanced drug control strategies and to enhance regional cooperation and networking in the fight against illicit drugs.

The decision to hold these plenary sessions in itself signifies the continuing concern of the international community at the threat posed by illicit narcotics. To do justice to that concern, the conclusions of our debate should be substantive in nature and must show the way forward. The decisions taken by the plenary should reinforce not only the political importance of the issue and the coordination and leadership role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, but also the determination of the international community to intensify its cooperation in seeking remedies to the threat posed by illicit drugs.

We are dealing with a real threat to people and to States. We must act vigorously and together to defeat that threat.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Carlos Amat Fores, Minister of Justice of Cuba.

Mr. AMAT FORES (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation would like to join preceding speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election, and we wish to express our willingness to cooperate with you. We know that given your experience and wisdom these high-level meetings will be crowned with success.

I should like to commend the work being done by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and Mr. Herbert Shaepe, Secretary of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The United Nations and its Member States have made many efforts in the last few years to curtail or stop illegal drug trafficking and its consequences. The special attention given this item at this forty-eighth session is evidence of this.

These efforts have led to the adoption of the following international documents and instruments by United Nations bodies: the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the Political Statement and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session. In addition, the Assembly proclaimed the period from 1991 to 2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse. In another resolution adopted in December 1990, it established the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which was set up in March 1991.

It has now become almost commonplace to describe the dangers that drugs pose to health; their threat to social stability and to the welfare of millions of people; the terrible medical, ethical and moral effects of drugs, particularly among young people; the relationship between demand, consumption, manufacturing, supply, trafficking and illegal distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances and the economic, social and cultural conditions of countries affected by these activities; and the infiltration into and corruption of many Government structures as a result of the ever-increasing economic power of the transnational criminal organizations involved in the illegal trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. All these factors undermine social and economic development activities, weakening cultural and human values and threatening the very foundations of States.

The most highly regarded international organizations, non-governmental organizations and various countries of the world have assigned to the drug problem outstanding experts, Government officials and distinguished personalities but, despite profound and comprehensive analyses, despite the resolutions and recommendations adopted, and despite the collective and individual actions taken by countries, the drug problem becomes every day more acute and distressing to all.

In spite of the efforts, lately increased, by countries and institutions, the consumption, production and illegal trafficking of drugs have increased and spread throughout the world. Related crimes have increased proportionately, and the international community is becoming alarmed by the growing threat and the world-wide reach of this phenomenon. The situation becomes even more dramatic when we see that more and more human beings are becoming involved in the consumption, manufacturing and distribution of drugs; that countries which heretofore were not consumers are now having to face this new crisis; that new geographic areas are involved in drug trafficking and consumption; and that money laundering is damaging even the healthiest of economies.

In fact, efforts at prevention and control have not been successful enough, and in the case of the poorest countries, the sacrifices that they have had to make are far beyond their capabilities. There is a profound difference between consuming and producing countries. Most of the demand comes from, and the major consumers are, the richer countries. These, as a result of illegal drug trafficking, often reap most of the economic benefits.

Likewise, when consumer countries offer assistance to producing countries - either bilaterally or through international financial institutions - they force them to accept conditions which at times result in a loss of sovereignty or, at best, political submission. This sets a negative precedent in regional and international relations.

As far as my Government is concerned, drug consumption is the generating force in manufacturing and trafficking. This is why we believe that the main emphasis in our struggle against drugs should be on reducing demand, if we truly want to achieve long-term goals.

We are aware that problems related to illegal drug activities and the actions taken to combat such activities concern every country of the world in one way or another; if we are to win the battle, we must recognize that it is the duty of the entire international community to fight this evil.

The fight must be waged with complete respect for the sovereignty of States and absolute compliance with the norms of international law, and without intervention or the extraterritorial application of the internal laws of one State under the pretext of combating drugs.

Joint action against drug trafficking must guarantee the full sovereignty of every people or country, however small. The powerful countries must not be given the right to lay down guidelines and impose their will by force. No one can lay claim to the leadership of this fight, or impose such leadership with armies, agencies or unilateral measures.

As has often been repeated in international forums, Cuba, because of its geographical position, is affected by the consequences of international drug trafficking. With a real political will, we have made serious efforts to combat it, which have for the most part met with success.

Despite our difficult economic situation, aggravated by the United States blockade, and made worse still by the passage of the Torricelli law which, among other things, prevents or hinders us from legitimately acquiring narcotics and other medications needed for medical treatment and research, our work in dealing with drugs that were being illegally trafficked has produced manifest results.

Although drug consumption is not a social phenomenon in Cuba, preventive activities are carried out to avoid drug abuse, and we work daily to perfect existing controls and to improve our knowledge of the matter so that our country does not become a victim of the scourge of drugs.

At the international level, Cuba has continued negotiating and signing bilateral agreements. Several accords have been signed with countries in our region, and we are now in the final stages of signing new accords both within and outside the region. We are also maintaining mutually advantageous cooperation with other countries.

This year my Government submitted to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) the Republic of Cuba's master plan to combat illicit drug traffic. Likewise, responding to the appeal by the United Nations, we have prepared a plan for the Decade against Drug Abuse. In July 1992 we established the Cuban National Committee, made up of agencies and institutions involved in the fight against drugs, which is preparing numerous activities.

We recognize the pressing need to continue improving committed international cooperation. We must be objective in analysing what has been done so far and what results have been achieved. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was an important step forward. However, my delegation wishes to reiterate its well-grounded concern that the precepts contained in article 17 of that Convention could become the legal pretext for illegitimate action by one State which in the field of drug trafficking is trying arbitrarily to apply - and has already done so - the new and questionable theory of "limited sovereignty", which flagrantly violates the sacred principles of international law. There is no judicial, political or any other reason that can justify the violation of those principles. No one ever has the right to violate a country's sovereignty, and non-intervention is an international obligation.

One State's malicious interpretations of article 17 have opened the door to arbitrary actions, acts of piracy and offenses against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another State. This is extremely disturbing and completely unacceptable to my country, which is therefore prevented from ratifying the Convention until there is a true interpretation of article 17, which could constitute a true guarantee for developing countries, allowing them to defend themselves against the aggression of the more powerful. In the terms in which it is stated, the fight requires open, sincere and effective cooperation between States, as well as dynamism and objectivity in the assistance offered for it.

Top priority must be given to the establishment of new formal, genuine commitments to reduce the demand, production, sale, traffic and illegal distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances; the improvement of standards of living through international cooperation for development, as an alternative for those who produce and sell drugs because of extreme poverty; a careful review by each country of its national legislation on the various aspects of the problem, in order to update and harmonize those laws - we attach great importance to this, because the legal means must be created to judge and punish criminal activities and confiscate the illegitimate wealth they produce; strengthening of the international fight against organized crime involved in drug production and other illicit activities involving drugs, as well as the illegal traffic in arms and explosives; the establishment of international rules and standards allowing for uniform treatment of crimes linked to drug trafficking.

We must update existing agreements and make them fully effective. It would also be worthwhile to analyse some aspects which have not yet been studied in depth and which could at some point require international action - for example, money laundering and control of the use of chemical precursors.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes to reiterate my country's readiness to consider bilaterally with other countries the possibility of cooperation on various aspects of the problem so as to confront the drug phenomenon better, and our readiness to sign the various relevant agreements to give effect to our decisions.

Each country's strategies and plans must be backed up by a real political will to confront the complex phenomenon of drugs. This political will must also be present in international cooperation and concerted action by States. This spirit, and not the use or threat of force in international relations, must guide our common action so that it may achieve successful results.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on Mr. Arnaldo Velarde Ramírez, Head of the Office Coordinating Joint Activities against Drug Trafficking of Peru.

Mr. VELARDE RAMIREZ (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The gathering that we are attending today is designed to gauge the true dimensions and political significance of the issue of the campaign against drug trafficking on the overall agenda of the United Nations. We are here to give fresh political impetus to the issue of drugs within the General Assembly context.

We all recall the special session of the United Nations held in February 1990, at which the overall comprehensive approach to cooperation on a multilateral level was established. That approach was a result of clear agreement on the principles contained in the political statement, among which the principles of shared responsibility and international solidarity stand out. At the same time the United Nations International Drug Control Programme was set up, and the period from 1991 to 2000 was proclaimed the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

Let us consider what has been achieved in the period that has elapsed since then. In practice, in the course of the first three years of the Decade, it would appear that for various reasons which need to be studied, we have not addressed all the components of the global strategy simultaneously and in an integrated way. The efforts that we have made on the international level in that period have been targeted towards combating the problem by means of strategies aimed at reducing demand and efforts to reduce illicit drug trafficking. Less attention has been given to strategies designed to reduce supply, and thus we have lost sight of the comprehensive approach to which we conceptually aspire and which we wish to see underlying and bolstering our action.

We need therefore to return to the intrinsic purposes and significance of the comprehensiveness of our action, so that regardless of whether our country is a producer, a consumer or a country of transit, we may remain alert and active in the face of all the manifestations of drug trafficking.

In these circumstances, drug trafficking has diversified in means and forms, outstripping any of our best efforts. Furthermore, there has been a multiplier effect, strangely enough, because organized crime has responded to greater interdiction and control with a greater level of drug production, stimulating an increase in illicit cultivation.

The Government of Peru has been constantly endeavouring to control and eradicate illicit drug trafficking and associated crime through interdiction measures, and at the same time it has devoted substantial effort to finding new approaches to the supply side, incorporating the social dimension into its efforts to eradicate this scourge once and for all. Hence the importance that we attach to perfecting the components of a strategy of alternative development.

Certainly, there have been a number of attempts to give effect to this concept in the Organization's work, although it needs to be said, in terms of concrete results, that the lack of any overall vision has hampered the achievement of the hoped-for results. This has led us to seek points of agreement on this aspect, and here we should pay particular attention to the results of the meetings that were held in Berlin and in Lima. Indeed, this past September, the first inter-American meeting of experts in alternative development took place in Lima. For the first time, this regional forum, which serves to pool inter-American efforts to combat drug trafficking, embarked on the exploration of a possible solution to the problem from an economic and social perspective. This exercise, which centres on alternative development, is not only a contribution to the doctrine on the subject, but is also a pragmatic step towards designing new regional strategies.

This work has gradually led to a preliminary consensus on the components of the strategy of alternative development. This is a strategy designed to prevent or solve the problems arising from illicit production. In essence, not only does it propose crop substitution, but it also aims at fully incorporating the social groups involved in such activities into a lawful economy by means of plans and programmes that put into effect an integrated system of socio-economic development. Such a system would give particular consideration to the central actors in the problem, in an environmentally sustainable framework and with the necessary support of transparent and less restrictive world markets. The restoration and the preservation of the area of the richest biodiversity in the world, that is, the Amazon region, is a genuine possibility with the strategy of alternative development.

The message delivered yesterday on behalf of the Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, is in accord with this approach. He indicated that the problem of drugs was a global threat to the same extent as the damage inflicted on the environment, AIDS and poverty itself. It is not a question of adding yet another concept to those with which the United Nations system already works. An alternative development strategy, attacking as it does the roots of the problem, offers greater promise of success in combating drug trafficking in the present circumstances, since because of its scope it is the most energetic response in combating the activities of organized crime.

We are therefore gratified that the draft resolution (A/48/L.12) which we shall very probably be adopting today, and which represents a relaunching of the multilateral effort to combat drugs, contains as one of its basic tasks anti-drug cooperation in programmes of alternative development.

The Government of Peru works in close cooperation with the Organization through dynamic coordination with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Experiences in the field have provided a basis for shared apprenticeship, which has gradually enhanced the effectiveness of cooperation programmes in various areas of national priority. My country's commitment at the highest political level to continue enhancing that cooperation, as well as the tireless work of Dr. Giorgio Giacomelli, are tangible proof of the real progress that can be made in the immediate future.

Peru has given tangible proof of its sense of moral responsibility to the international community in our work to combat this scourge. It should be noted that advanced legislation which controls and punishes crimes associated with drug trafficking - such as the diversion of precursors and essential chemicals, trafficking in arms and explosives, money-laundering, and in particular the dismantling and eradication of the links between terrorist organizations and drug trafficking are central parts of our policy. To this we must add successful control of airports and the interception of aircraft that are being used for illicit purposes.

The progress that has been achieved is the result of close cooperation between public and private institutions, with active participation on the part of the public in a struggle in which our nation is daily becoming more and more united.

At the same time, the Standing Intersectoral Commission is trying to coordinate approaches to achieve a national master plan as soon as possible, harmonize national anti-drug legislation and create an organic system to implement national anti-drug policy.

No one here is blind to the challenges we face or the daunting obstacles we must overcome if we are to achieve total success. But the reality of these formidable challenges should not dishearten us. Peru, as a country and a society, has also faced considerable and sometimes discouraging difficulties; but given a well-defined purpose it was able to overcome them, demonstrating that where there is a firm resolve anything is possible and the most cherished dream can come true.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Amir Khasru Chowdhury, Member of Parliament of Bangladesh.

Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh): The drug scourge today is a global phenomenon. It is an issue that threatens both our present and future generations. The world-wide consciousness and our collective drive against drug abuse and narcotics trafficking are still far from driving a nail into the heart of the issue. In fact, the general disorganization and degeneration that our societies are experiencing in varying degrees are being exacerbated to a large extent by drug trafficking and abuse.

What appears to be a matter for great alarm is the fact that illicit drug trafficking is thriving despite the collective will of the international community to thwart it. Is it that the traffickers are so powerful as to have the arrogance to disregard the authority of national Governments and to test the will of the international community? Or is it that our combat strategies are somehow flawed, allowing traffickers a false sense of security that they can pursue their evil designs? These are aspects of the issue that merit our most serious attention as we gather here to examine the status of international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse.

One of the biggest incentives to illegal drug trafficking is the immense profitability of the trade. Our primary effort must therefore be to hit at this area. To put it more simply, the trade will die only if we can ensure that there is no market for it. In this, we must mount a multi-pronged offensive directed against the production, distribution and consumption of illegal drugs.

Because of its illicit nature, it is almost impossible to estimate the exact extent of the world's total drug production. But given the fact that it is being carried out on a global basis and spreading across both hemispheres, there is no reason to doubt its enormous scale. Poorer and developing countries are often accused of being lenient towards drug production because they have few other meaningful economic options. Political instability and insurgencies are also viewed as ideal conditions for illegal drug production. These are undoubtedly forceful arguments, but there must be a larger dimension to the issue, since illegal drug production is not limited to the so-called third world countries alone. Whatever the source, the issue calls for a concerted and collective approach. If conditions of poverty encourage drug production, let the international community provide the necessary input to eliminate poverty. If insurgency is a factor preventing enforcement agencies from reaching the areas of drug production, let the international community come to the aid of those Governments to fight the insurgency.

Our efforts to eliminate drug production will not be worth while unless we can crack down on the marketing and distribution mechanisms. And here lies our most formidable obstacle. The trafficking of drugs is conducted by syndicated cartels and drug lords who wield tremendous power. They are a species that have no scruples, suffer no conscience and have total disregard for human life and dignity. They have created their own empires, have their own private armies and enjoy a seemingly impregnable sense of security.

The conduct of this heinous trade is done through transnational consortiums. The chain involves the acquisition of chemicals to produce drugs, their transportation and distribution, and the laundering of profits through financial institutions. Drug traffickers are constantly developing new codes in their communications system and novel tricks to avoid detection. The courier caught at the port is merely a pawn in a game played by an unseen boss. In most cases, the courier takes the punishment while the principal criminal remains at large. To win this war of wits, we must clearly be on top of the situation. Our intelligence network and detection technology must surely be flawless, constantly updated and improved. Because the combat is being fought on a global basis, we cannot afford to leave any one front less equipped than the other. But it hardly needs to be emphasized that the developing countries - particularly the least developed among them - are at an obvious disadvantage in this respect. There must be a pooling of resources and sharing of technology if our global offensive is really to succeed.

The horrors of drug abuse and its tragic consequences find their manifestation in the consumers. Drug consumption and addiction are like a contagious virus spreading in an epidemic. The tragedy begins with the next generation, our youth. Frustration from a lack of alternatives, recreational facilities and employment opportunities more often than not makes youth an easy prey to the drug menace. Addiction breeds crime, terrorism and violence and threatens a total breakdown of the social fabric. The magnitude of drug abuse as it stands today has spared no society. The campaign against drug abuse must therefore begin early. Motivation has to be there right from the elementary-school levels and children must be taught to avoid drugs like the plague. Institutionalized support to treat addicts and reintegrate them into society must be strengthened. The family institution, which serves as the anchor of social integrity, must be involved in this effort. For this, we must be prepared to provide whatever support is necessary.

The issue of drug abuse and illicit trafficking is a matter of serious concern to Bangladesh. Given our proximity to the so-called Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent, our country is vulnerable to in-transit drug trafficking. As a small nation beset with many problems we are cautious not to allow drug abuse to add to our woes. Our Government, under Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, is determined to address the issue on all fronts: national, subregional, regional and global.

The fact that the issue has not yet assumed any alarming dimension in Bangladesh is the result of certain traditional and religious checks and balances ingrained in our society. But social safeguards alone are not enough to combat the drug issue in its entirety; it is a crime that can be controlled only if we are prepared to be harsh in hunting down the criminal. Our goal is not just to check drug abuse, but to checkmate the drug trafficker. We in Bangladesh therefore have stringent, punitive sentences for drug trafficking. We believe that such measures are appropriate for those who profit from human life and misery.

Our national Narcotics Control Act of 1990 strictly prohibits the cultivation, production, processing, transportation, sale or possession of illicit drugs. The administrative body set up in support of this law, the Narcotics Control Board, is the focal point for all anti-drug activities in the country. On the curative side, we have set up a central treatment centre for drug addicts. The Government is also addressing itself to the rehabilitation of former addicts and their reintegration into mainstream society.

In cooperation with bilateral donors and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, a five-year master plan on drug-abuse control has been undertaken, beginning in January 1993. The major thrust of the plan is on law enforcement, treatment and rehabilitation, and preventive education and information.

At the regional level, Bangladesh and the six other member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) are addressing the issue through active regional cooperation. The signing of the SAARC Convention on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which Bangladesh has already ratified, is a landmark in this direction.

Bangladesh is also actively involved in the international efforts against drug abuse. Our efforts in this regard are fully in line with the 1990 United Nations Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action. Bangladesh was among the very first countries to ratify the 1988 Convention against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances. We are also party to the United Nations drug Conventions of 1961 and 1971.

We trust that further strengthening of the United Nations efforts through a system-wide action plan and coordination between the specialized agencies can effectively complement national drives against drug abuse and trafficking. There is much truth in the saying that prevention is always better than cure, and we wish to underscore here that countries, such as Bangladesh, where drug abuse has not yet become a major problem need our urgent attention before it is just too late.

It is a matter of gratification to my delegation that delegations here are unanimous in our desire to control drug abuse. The statements of other representatives espousing stronger integration in the international drive against drug abuse, and support for national programmes, reassure us that we are together in our cause.

We are happy that the Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, has also accorded the issue all due importance.

We trust that our deliberations in this special series of meetings will provide valuable insights and clear guidance to our ongoing efforts towards a drug-free world.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. TARMIDZI (Indonesia): I should like to express the Indonesian delegation's deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his thoughtful and informative message to this Assembly, as delivered by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

Let me also express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for your opening statement, delivered yesterday.

Indonesia is greatly disturbed by the continuing threats posed to virtually all countries by the international trade in illicit narcotics and by drug abuse. Although this issue has remained a top priority on the global agenda, the myriad problems of illicit trafficking and drug abuse remain undiminished, even though substantial initiatives have been launched in many areas.

For some countries, the threats posed have become a tragic reality, as institutions have become strained and the capacity of national and local law enforcement have been taken beyond their capacity for an effective response. Health and social-welfare services have likewise been greatly overburdened in providing for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers, and for the associated health problems.

For the developed and developing countries alike, narcotics trafficking and abuse have undeniably contributed to a serious deterioration in social values, ethics and healthy lifestyles. The drugs dilemma has likewise retarded development at all levels by substantially diverting urgently needed resources, financial as well as human. This haemorrhage of financial resources must be brought to a quick end. As the drugs problem is global in dimension, we have come to a collective realization and acknowledgement that only global, integrated solutions will offer any remedy of lasting value.

Thus it was that, in 1987, the Ministerial-level International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was convened in Vienna and expressed the political will and determination to address this problem in a comprehensive and effective manner at all levels. That Conference was a watershed event, with its unanimous adoption of a Declaration and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities.

The mutual understanding between countries - producers, consumers and transit - has since been greatly strengthened and firmly secured in their agreement that a balanced approach is necessary, addressing the aspects of both supply and demand. In that connection, my delegation would like to underline the potential of rural-development programmes that encourage legal cultivation and make it an attractive prospect for farmers by offering them a fair return for their labour. Furthermore, efforts aimed at the destruction of illicit crops should be undertaken with due regard to the environmental impact.

Nearly four years have elapsed since the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly was convened, during which a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action were adopted with a view to enhancing international drug-control strategy and activities. A significant consequence was the integration of the United Nations drug-control bodies into one single United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). This was a necessary and welcome restructuring effort to streamline United Nations activities in this field and provide for the optimum utilization of scarce resources. The special session, moreover, reaffirmed the view that because of the tragic nature of the problem, international solidarity and the concerted, collective and simultaneous action of the international community were required.

In that connection, my delegation would like to welcome and support the draft resolution that was well prepared by the delegation of Mexico, and submitted by the President as draft resolution A/48/L.12, entitled "International drug control", as yet one more concrete step in strengthening international cooperation.

On the subregional level, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) continues to strengthen collaboration amongst its members, implementing projects of the group of ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters in such areas as preventive drug education, interdiction, research- and information-sharing, law enforcement, and treatment and rehabilitation. I should note that this is in line with activities recommended by the Secretary-General with reference to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. Similarly, ASEAN continues to work in close cooperation with other States in the region, as well as with its dialogue partners, in a common search for pragmatic but effective drug-control solutions.

ASEAN cooperation with the European Community remains strong, with such projects as the European Community technical assistance mission, which has reviewed ASEAN's needs in the areas of drug rehabilitation and drug-abuse prevention. In that connection, ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters held several working group meetings on prevention education, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement and research. ASEAN also maintains close working relations with the United States and anticipates the convening of an ASEAN-United States conference on drugs in the near future.

The United Nations ad hoc inter-agency meeting on coordination in matters of international drug abuse control pointed to the need to strengthen cooperative ties with non-governmental organizations, which ASEAN has resolved to do. The twenty-sixth ASEAN Standing Committee meeting, held on 27 and 28 May 1993, approved an application by the group ASEAN Non-Governmental Organizations for Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse to have a formal working relationship with ASEAN. Likewise, Indonesia relies on the important contribution of non-governmental organizations and of community participation in such areas as education in drug prevention, and in the important area of rehabilitation.

The strong cooperative arrangements that exist between ASEAN and its various dialogue partners, as well as with other States within its region, have strengthened the capacity of its States members for effective response. Such a national, subregional and interregional structure could, in my view, serve as one model for the promotion of international drug control.

United Nations drug control treaties have placed effective juridical mechanisms at the disposal of the international community, facilitating necessary cooperation among nations in drug control. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has made a strong addition by addressing such crucial aspects as money-laundering and mutual legal assistance among States. As a signatory, Indonesia will work with others to ensure its optimum success. In this regard, my delegation would like to note that the UNDCP has been providing such assistance, and should continue to render this important service.

Let me conclude by saying that, just as drug abuse contributes to social deterioration, poverty and despair provide a fertile ground for the sale and abuse of narcotics. All countries, but particularly developing countries, have experienced the negative effects of a poor global economy and resource restrictions that have adversely impacted on such crucial areas as the creation of productive employment opportunities. Therefore, long-term solutions to social welfare issues, and particularly to drug-abuse prevention, must take into account the fundamental needs and aspirations of society, and the progressive improvement of the human condition - physically, ethically and religiously. This will require a commitment by both North and South in areas of economic cooperation, as well as their continued commitment to the goals to be achieved during this United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on Mr. Alberto Lestelle, Secretary of State for Programming on Drug Prevention of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. LESTELLE (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I shall read out only portions of my written statement, for the full text contains many things that have already been said and that will be said again before the day is over. I shall use the time allotted to me to share some of my thoughts on this subject.

First of all, we would like to acknowledge this important opportunity to participate in these meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the important and serious issue of drug control.

We thank the delegation of Mexico for preparing, together with other delegations, the draft resolution submitted by the President. Recognizing once more the value of concentrating all the Organization's efforts in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, we take note of the important work being carried out by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board.

The circumstances of the so-called transit States are unique and are not adequately reflected in the initiatives for international cooperation. These countries, including my own, require greater and increasing international aid to fight successfully against this phenomenon. Hence, we would like to see the international programmes of cooperation pay increased attention to the special situation of the countries I refer to.

Among other things, we need the adoption of the necessary legal instruments to control drugs, adapting them to the new modalities of this crime and reflecting in the legal framework elements such as the undercover agent, the informer and all the modalities set forth in the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The repression of illicit drug trafficking should be balanced with preventive aspects related to reducing demand. This latter issue must be approached through comprehensive prevention programmes including real and feasible plans for alternative development, within which the programmes for productive and profitable micro-enterprises should be the axis of employment policies, a key preventive factor in developing countries. We must pay special attention to the causes of the problem: the unfair terms of international trade, which condemn farmers in developing countries to face the alternative of either producing illicit drugs or opting for humiliating subsistence conditions, must be analysed and assessed in their true dimension.

We would like to state here that the Argentine Government is opposed to any initiative aimed at legalizing any activity now considered illicit in the area of drugs. This experiment has already been tried in several countries with negative and traumatic results for the community.

Allow me now to refer briefly to the situation in Argentina. In 1989, when it took office, the Government of President Carlos Raúl Menem created within the purview of the presidency a Bureau for Programming on Drug Prevention and Drug-Trafficking Control. This does not report to any single ministry, but develops policies under the direct orders of the national executive branch.

In our view, this organizational structure is a new, creative development that goes beyond those interministry commissions that encounter difficulties in their operation and functioning.

Here I should like briefly to comment on one point. There is an action and a reaction in illicit drug trafficking and related crime. Action is homogeneous, direct and the same in all countries, whether the United Kingdom, the United States, Argentina, Costa Rica, Panama, Australia, Bolivia, or any other country. The action of the drug-trafficking mafias is exactly the same in every country. In each country they produce drugs directly or through intermediaries; they operate illegally by smuggling precursor chemicals; they launder money in every country; they promote drug consumption in all countries; they make young people and street children sick with drugs and they bring death in all countries, without exception. In other words, the drug-trafficking mafias operate in a manner that is consistent, organic, ongoing and always the same.

How do we, the Governments, respond to this homogeneity? Unfortunately, we respond with heterogeneity. Quite reasonably, every Government wants to establish a system to try to contain the phenomenon. One Government may perfectly properly, for each is free to choose, feel the Ministry of Health can deal with the problem, which is correct, because of course drug dependency is a sickness. But another Government may feel that action should be coordinated under the Ministry of Finance which is also correct, because money laundering is one of the most serious drug trafficking problems. Another Government might give the job to the Ministry of Security, another to the Ministry of Justice, another to Social Affairs, and another to a personal representative of the President. Without being hypocritical, perhaps I could say we are trying to defend ourselves using the Keystone Kops.

Consistency is important in action. At another international meeting a few days ago I was speaking with a Health Minister who had the job of coordinating all aspects related to this phenomenon, and I naturally asked him how he coordinated transborder controls. He replied "Oh, that's a problem for the Ministry of Defence." I then asked how he coordinated internal controls for internal security and he said "That's for the Ministry of the Interior." I then asked what he did to establish a system whereby prevention was part of the education programme, and he answered "That's a problem for the Ministry of Education." Dumbfounded, I then asked him "Who coordinates everything?" because all his answers were quite true. He answered "A Commission." That raised the obvious question of how often the Commission met. I was told "Maybe once a month." Fine, once a month. I then asked "Who coordinates the decisions of the Commission?" The Health Minister said "Well, sometimes it's me, and sometimes it's the Education Minister, depending on what aspect is involved."

In fact, therefore, all those procedures being carried out by Governments with considerable effort and sacrifice - sometimes with great resolve, sometimes with less resolve - mean that we do not have a homogeneous reaction to the homogeneous action being carried out by the drug-trafficking mafia, by which they are trying to attack our societies and destroy our families. Therefore, without wishing to interfere with the political decisions of Governments, perhaps my country might offer the international community a description of its experience in this field and suggest to Governments that national bodies be set up at the highest possible level to implement the policies of the Executive and to coordinate all the work relating to the problem so as to achieve the best results.

As we see it, there is no alternative, after so many meetings at the international level, we have been meeting for months, for years trying to understand a phenomenon which is becoming ever more complex. Without coordination at the government level it seems to us unlikely we can find the right remedy. Solutions are hard to find. We must become fully aware of the overriding importance of this issue in the United Nations and try at least to increase efforts and ensure coordination. If we do not have coordination - and I am not being pessimistic; I am being realistic - this increasingly complex problem will result in an increasing number of victims. Do representatives know what the real problem is? It is that the victimizers - those who produce, who traffic, who sell, who corrupt - are adults, but the victims are innocent: young people and children. We should think about that.

I should like quickly to speak of what has been done in my country. We have prevention programmes, public awareness campaigns, national publicity campaigns, sports programmes, preventive education programmes, training for teachers, workers and community leaders. There are courses on prevention, training leaders of society, sports people, educators, parents, grandparents, young people - everybody, including students in middle schools and primary schools.

We have an assistance plan, including help for families in difficult situations; more than 2,000 are receiving help to win their children back from this terrible scourge. We are also trying to provide treatment for people in jail. We offer public information services and support services for governmental and non-governmental organizations.

We have draft laws on psychotropic substances, alcoholism, prevention, assistance and services. Our international cooperation projects include seminars on community therapy co-sponsored by Daytop International, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the United States State Department; seminars dealing with the control of precursor chemicals; a Latin American plan for training in health, education and justice carried out by the Argentine Government in Costa Rica, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic; seminars on mobilizing communities, conducted in cooperation with the University of Oklahoma; and much, much more.

We must participate internationally in dealing with this problem, which has become truly international, and in the last four years we have signed agreements on cooperation to prevent drug abuse with Bolivia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, the United States, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Italy, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.

I should like to say, in conclusion, that my delegation fully supports the draft resolution that is before the Assembly. It is clearly a well-balanced text containing specific guidelines for the organizations of the United Nations system and setting out measures for a high-level follow-up of the provisions of the plan of action. We trust that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Augusto Durán Martínez, Deputy Minister of the Presidency of Uruguay.

Mr. DURAN MARTINEZ (Uruguay) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The drug phenomenon is an extremely complex problem - complex in that it has not just a single cause but many causes: economic, social, ethical, political, and so on. It is also complex in that it is not simply a health problem, but tends to undermine institutions, to corrupt society and, ultimately, to degrade the individual. Another factor that makes it complex is that the links in the chain of illicit drug trafficking, from cultivation to money laundering, from the production and illicit marketing of precursors and other chemical substances essential to the production of drugs to the manufacturing and consumption of and trafficking in drugs, are to be found in various countries, giving the problem a transnational character. This has led to a new type of criminality - organized crime, which, apart from the fact that it is extremely dangerous because of the vastness of the economic means available to it, makes classical liberal criminal law inadequate.

Owing to its complexity, the problem is not capable of being dealt with by means of a single response. It is necessary to take repressive measures to combat criminal activities; supportive measures aimed at the addict's reintegration into society; and, above all, educational measures designed to reduce consumption. And reduction of consumption is the key to solution of the problem.

These measures must not be taken in isolation; they must be coordinated. They must not be taken on a local basis; they must mobilize the entire international community. Naturally, action must be taken within the framework of the law and of respect for the sovereignty of States, and it must take account of the special characteristics of each State. In this regard, much has been done. However, despite the excellent work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and despite Mr. Giacomelli's very effective leadership, the drug problem, generally speaking, has not lessened. On the contrary, it has increased. This obliges us to redouble our efforts to try new strategies. Here - in the United Nations - we have the ideal arena for an exchange of opinions on the question and for expressions of support for the excellent draft resolution that stemmed from Mexico's praiseworthy initiative.

Mr. Murthy (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In this area, international cooperation, by way of the exchange of information and the coordination of police investigations, is indispensable. In the legal area, too, international cooperation is vital to securing greater effectiveness in the prosecution and judicial processes. In the technological and economic areas also, it is vital to the proper completion of various projects. In addition, it is obviously necessary that the trade barriers that impede or prevent the development of alternative methods be removed - something else that calls for international cooperation.

In all of this - apart from the bilateral activities that may be engaged in - the action of international organizations is extremely important. However, although international cooperation is vital, it is not enough if it does not go hand in hand with appropriate internal measures. Anyone who does not show the necessary political resolve to tackle the drug problem does not deserve cooperation, and there can be no redemption for a country that cooperates at the international level but does not take the appropriate domestic measures.

Uruguay is really a newcomer to this problem, and we have therefore begun only recently to take action in this respect. However, we accept that we have a real, legal duty - not just an ethical responsibility - to engage in the struggle against drugs. Indeed, we have recently been doing this with very strong political resolve. In accordance with international recommendations, the Government set up the National Board for the Prevention and Suppression of Illicit Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse to draw up policies in this area and to coordinate their implementation by the competent bodies.

The Republic is a signatory to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, but has not yet ratified it. However, ratification has been approved by the House of Representatives, and we expect early approval by the Senate. In any event, although the Convention is not in force in our country, we have been following its basic guidelines. Indeed, we have signed many treaties for legal assistance in penal matters - with the United States, with Spain, with the United Kingdom and with Brazil - and it is expected that these will be ratified very soon. In 1991 we signed cooperation agreements with Chile, with Bolivia and with Brazil, and these were ratified about a month ago.

The executive branch of government has also introduced a draft law which has already been approved by one of the Houses of our Parliament and which is designed to update our penal legislation on drugs, with a view to - among other objectives - criminalizing money laundering and the illicit production and marketing of precursors, in accordance with the guidelines of the Model Law drawn up by the Inter-American Commission for Drug Abuse Control. We have adopted legislative standards that will facilitate control by the Central Bank of Uruguay over the brokerage houses, with a view to making money laundering more difficult. Already, there is a large data bank, and studies were carried out recently with a view to formulating policies and putting them on sounder bases. Police work has been improved, and significant efforts are being made to set up a rehabilitation centre. Lastly, there has been a great deal of progress in both formal and informal aspects of prevention.

All those measures - in addition to Uruguay's active presence in the most important international forums in this field - clearly demonstrate its commitment to dealing with this problem.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Raul Del Mar, Member of the House of Representatives of the Philippines.

Mr. DEL MAR (Philippines): I am privileged to speak at the special high-level meetings of the General Assembly on a subject of grave concern to the world.

Mankind has been troubled by various scourges that have taken their toll in human life and suffering, bringing disease, economic deprivation and social dislocation to hapless populations. At no time in history, however, has mankind faced such a problem such as drug abuse, for it is a scourge that recognizes no boundaries. Indeed, drug abuse is a transnational problem of such magnitude that it is adversely affecting the growth levels of many countries.

My Government therefore welcomes this opportunity to examine, together with the other States Members of the United Nations, the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Aware of the grave threat posed by drug abuse to the health and well-being of our people, to the stability of nations and to the political, economic and social structures of societies, the Philippine Government has committed itself to a total war against the problem.

In the Philippines, the problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to cause serious concern nationwide. There are two factors responsible for the unabating drug problem: first, the high population density of bigger cities, coupled with rapid urbanization and, secondly, the proximity of drug sources and supply.

The Philippines' national drug strategy consists of two components: first, the legislative and regulatory programme which takes care of the enactment of appropriate laws and the formulation of rules and regulations to reduce the availability of dangerous drugs, consistent with the legitimate medical requirements of the country; and, secondly, the drug law-enforcement programme, whose objectives include the eradication of cannabis plantations; the destruction or neutralization of drug trafficking networks; preventing the diversion of illicit drugs from authorized outlets; and controlling the importation of illicit drugs through rigid enforcement of customs laws and expanded international cooperation and coordination with foreign enforcement agencies to identify, monitor and neutralize international trafficking syndicates. It also covers treatment, rehabilitation, preventive education, training and information.

The national strategy hinges on two key concepts which call for keeping abusers away from drugs and for keeping drugs away from abusers. My Government has done much work in prevention and rehabilitation. The Philippine Congress has passed a law integrating drug prevention and control in intermediate- and secondary-school curricula and in the non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems. The new law focuses on the ill effects of drug abuse, drug addiction or drug dependency.

In the case of rehabilitation, we have a serious lack of rehabilitation centres, but the ones we do have at the moment have excellent performance records. Our Narcotics Command Rehabilitation Centre has what appears to be the lowest relapse rate in the world - only 19 to 20 per cent, compared with the world rate of 40 to 50 per cent. Treatment is provided free of charge and is aimed at discipline.

The national fight against drug abuse has been hamstrung by logistics, a problem shared by many countries. The peculiar nature of our geography - we are a group of more than 7,000 islands at the maritime and strategic crossroads of South-East Asia - renders an already difficult problem more complex.

On a regional level, the Philippines has faithfully met its commitments and obligations as a party to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Declaration of Principles on Drug Abuse Control. It has maintained an active level of cooperation with the Governments and agencies concerned with drug matters among the ASEAN dialogue partners.

Internationally, the Philippines is a State Party to the 1961 and 1971 Conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention. We signed the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and appropriate steps have been taken towards its ratification.

Our programme and policies on drug abuse control are based on the Comprehensive and Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, which preceded the Global Programme of Action. We have consistently supported initiatives on drug abuse control emanating from both the General Assembly's Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council.

We are particularly encouraged by the introduction of a "drug dimension" in the economic and sectoral work of the World Bank, including its lending strategies. The inclusion of such a facility, not only in the World Bank but in regional banks as well, will provide countries which produce drugs with a needed boost in developing planning through the programming and implementation of activities to reduce illicit narcotic crops. Within the context of rural poverty-alleviation programmes in areas where narcotic drugs are cultivated, the work of the International Fund for Agricultural Development should be maintained.

In the long term, the illicit cultivation of drugs must be addressed within the context of integrated rural development programmes which aim at providing rural communities with an economically viable alternative to narcotic crops.

To help developing countries implement more effectively their respective national strategies under the Global Programme of Action and to enable them to participate more meaningfully in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, developed countries must provide opportunities and terms of access for agricultural products and other products of importance to the diversification of production from the growing of illicit narcotic crops.

There is also a pressing need for the sharing of relevant data at the international level and for the provision of technical assistance to developing countries to help strengthen their enforcement capabilities. By strengthening international cooperation and effecting a better coordination of policies and programmes, the use of limited resources available to Governments to implement domestic strategies would be optimized.

While it is true that the global nature of the drug problem warrants a global approach, the United Nations and its member countries do recognize and appreciate the national work done by intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in the containment of the problem. In particular, the Philippine Government recognizes the humanitarian role of non-governmental organizations and volunteer groups in the prevention of drug abuse, in the rehabilitation of drug addicts, and in inculcating the ever-present danger of AIDS upon the consciousness of drug abusers.

My delegation commends the decision of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to call an international forum of non-governmental organizations next year to find ways of expanding cooperation on drug-demand reduction.

The end of the cold war has ushered in a period of deep uncertainty and change which exacerbates the drug problem. The capacity of many States to take remedial measures within their borders, as well as to act collectively for the safety and well-being of the world community, has been impaired by the upheavals of change. This situation has engendered an increase in the number of people at particular risk of drug addiction and abuse.

More than ever, the shared effort against illicit drug production, traffic and consumption must be maintained and strengthened. Towards this end, the Philippines will support proposals or initiatives for the full and effective implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Global Programme of Action against illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Within its limited capacity, my Government wishes to lend assistance in improving policies and programmes in three specific areas: first, in the creation and maintenance of a readily accessible database of programmes carried out and projected within the United Nations system and in providing access to comparable systems maintained by multilateral, regional and bilateral organizations; second, in technical-cooperation activities in drug-abuse control, particularly at the operational level in especially vulnerable countries, such as those considered to be transit States and those under attack from traffickers, so as to afford them easy access to modern technology and thereby facilitate the location and environmentally safe destruction of narcotic drugs and, at the same time, maintain respect for the dignity and sovereignty of the receiving State; and, third, in judicial action with penal implications at the national level, and possibly at the international level, to fight powerful drug lords and cartels.

As a State Party to the drug Conventions and other relevant instruments, the Philippines reaffirms its commitment to the global effort to eradicate the drug problem and hereby undertakes to participate actively and judiciously in United Nations initiatives against the drug menace.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Algeria, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria)*(interpretation from French)*: The scheduling by the General Assembly of high-level plenary meetings to examine the status of and prospects for international drug control marks an important advance in the international community's growing awareness of the global nature of the narcotics scourge and of the need for a constant improvement of the means and the cooperation already established to confront it.

The Secretary-General's introductory message, delivered here by Mr. Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), and the particularly eloquent reports that have been presented paint a striking picture of the global status of drug abuse and inform us that the transnational production-line of death and decay has earned the drug traffickers at least $500 billion in 1992 alone.

Just as the disease has often been diagnosed, so too have appropriate remedies been clearly identified and prescribed. Among them, of course, figures the broadest and most sustained international cooperation aimed at promoting prevention and at achieving stronger control and suppression through the coordination of national efforts and the establishment of mutual assistance among nations. In that context the activities of the UNDCP over the past two years are to be commended. The UNDCP has quickly become an operational, non-bureaucratic instrument whose means and resources must be strengthened. The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, whose meetings, which assemble qualified professionals in all fields, are oriented towards joint action and a useful exchange of experiences, has become a promising arena for imaginative and trust-based international cooperation.

The African continent, on which the combined ravages of man and nature have inflicted serious economic and social instability, has been singled out by the drug traffickers as a new and ideal launching pad for a large-scale expansion of their criminal activities. In less than a decade local drug consumption in Africa has greatly increased, and the continent has become an important centre for drug transit to neighbouring high-consumption areas.

Obviously, Africa must be given an important place on the list of UNDCP priorities, and its currently modest and inadequate share of budgetary appropriations must be radically augmented to a level that properly reflects a visible commitment by the international community to Africa in a struggle that requires strong and consistent support. The existence of weak links in the chain of international cooperation to combat illicit drug trafficking would be too deleterious to effective joint action for us not to give high priority to Africa's resource needs.

Because of its crucial geographical position and the extent of its land and sea borders, Algeria has over the years become a significant drug-transit country. A July 1993 publication of the Geopolitical Drug Observatory for the first time lists Algeria among the transit and/or consumer countries.

In fact, the responsible Algerian authorities, who are most keenly concerned at the increase in drug transit through the country, have noted, as a result of the seizures they have effected, that that transit involves not only cannabis but hard drugs as well, drugs that were unknown in Algeria until recently. The Algerian people, whose entrenched values have long shielded them from large-scale consumption, have become residual but not inconsiderable recipients of drugs in transit to the major markets of the northern hemisphere, a transit that has, by contamination, helped to create a market of local consumers.

Given that situation, the Algerian authorities have taken clear-sighted and determined steps to deal with the situation by establishing a base of action that includes public health and large-scale educational campaigns as well as the creation of legislative tools and intersectorial coordination. Multifaceted activities are being carried out in the framework of existing health-care and health-protection legislation. A National Commission to combat drugs and drug addiction has been created. A national steering programme to combat drugs is at an advanced stage of preparation. A national prevention campaign aimed primarily at young people has been launched and will continue throughout this year. At the same time, greater resources have been allocated to control at borders, ports and airports and such control has been made more rigorous and effective.

On the regional and international levels Algeria is playing an active role in specialized coordination with the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) in Africa and with other Arab and international organs. A joint programme, which is about to end, has been successfully carried out with UNDCP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and has opened wider and more ambitious prospects for an increased UNDCP effort to provide meaningful support to Algeria's determined endeavours to combat the scourge of drugs, both for its own sake and that of others.

In addressing the problem of illicit-drug trafficking at this high level, the General Assembly's intent has not been merely to echo, albeit with greater conviction and stronger resolve, a profession of faith that has already been voiced by the international community, so sorely tried by the persistent scourge. Nor should the Assembly be content with using this debate as an attempt to exorcise a devil that is destroying the health of countless human beings as it is undermining the values of the societies of which the plague's victims are a part.

What this "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" in pursuit of the common purposes articulated in the Charter should do is to expand the approach to international drug-control problems by making the requirements for combating illicit drug trafficking an integral part of the intrinsic components of human security. From this standpoint, the struggle against illicit drug trafficking will undoubtedly require a sufficient level of resources, but it will also and above all require an egalitarian concept of the individual's dignity and worth and the resolve to work for that concept at all times and in all circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Her Excellency Mrs. Grete Knudsen, Minister for Social Affairs of Norway.

Mrs. KNUDSEN (Norway): With your permission, Sir, I will divide my statement into two separate parts. First, I shall speak on behalf of the Norwegian Government, and then I shall make a brief statement on behalf of the Pompidou Group.

The overall aim of the Norwegian illicit-drugs policy is a society free from illicit drugs. Action against both the supply of and demand for illicit drugs has been accorded a high priority by the Norwegian Government ever since drug abuse emerged as a new social problem among young people in the mid-1960s.

Restrictive legal measures range from severe maximum sentences for illicit trafficking to penalties for the possession of illicit drugs for personal use and actual consumption as well. At the same time, Norway tries to balance law-enforcement measures with measures to reduce demand.

In line with the recommendations set forth in the United Nations Global Programme of Action, Norwegian policy is - as I see it - comprehensive, multisectorial and multidisciplinary. It comprises three major strategies:

First, a wide range of preventive measures are promoted in order to strengthen the social networks in local communities, where people live and children are brought up. There are, however, clear limits to what can be achieved through public efforts and funding. Much emphasis, therefore, is put on encouraging local community members to contribute towards making our communities drug-free and better places to live in.

Secondly, we realize the need for maintaining a strong public commitment and adequate public services at the local, regional and state levels. We are thus aiming at maintaining a net of effective and well-coordinated public services which are able to adapt to the many changing aspects of the drug-abuse phenomenon.

Thirdly, since illicit-drug abuse is indeed an international problem, we regard increased international cooperation to be of vital importance in our fight against the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs. Substantive progress can, in my opinion, be made also in the field of demand reduction through increased systematic evaluation of prevention and treatment programmes, exchange of experiences and systematic training of staff.

Although the problems we are facing may appear to be overwhelming, I wish to make it abundantly clear that my Government is opposed to any tendency toward resignation. We strongly reject therefore any proposal aimed at legalizing the non-medical use of drugs. Norway welcomes the very clear and convincing way in which the International Narcotics Control Board in its report has analysed the consequences of legalization of the non-medical use of drugs. Legalization would be contrary to existing provisions of the international drug-control treaties. I feel convinced that it would at the same time lead to an expansion of demand and that it would have a substantial impact on public health and social well-being.

In a spirit of optimism, Norway will continue to contribute substantially to international cooperation in the field of drug-abuse control. I would like to underline the important role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in this respect as the focal point for overall international coordination and as a global resource centre. We look with keen interest to the involvement of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan and will consider how we can most efficiently support its implementation.

I come now to the second part of my statement. As current President of the Pompidou Group, I shall express briefly some viewpoints on behalf of the Group.

The Pompidou Group is the Council of Europe's Cooperation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs. It comprises 25 European member States and the Commission of the European Communities.

There are, admittedly, some real differences between drug-abuse patterns and responses in the European countries. We do, however, share a mutual and deep concern at the continuing seriousness of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and the threat which they pose to society and to the health and well-being of its citizens, most especially young people. Europe is a diverse continent which is in a process of continual change. We welcome the dynamic political, economic and social changes that are taking place, but we are intent on preventing, through more effective collaboration, these changes from leading to a further increase in drug abuse and trafficking.

The Pompidou Group provides at the European level a forum where politicians, professionals and experts meet to discuss how best to improve our understanding of the drug phenomenon, its likely development and the action required in response to it. Its work programme reflects the Group's multidisciplinary nature and approaches. It includes activities in epidemiology in order to improve the data on trends in drug abuse in Europe; activities in demand reduction aiming at translating into practical reality the increased political importance attached to it; and action to combat illicit trafficking with the objective of sharing experience on the legislative approach to drug abuse and on the functioning of the criminal justice system.

A major political priority of the Pompidou Group is to bring the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into participation in the Group's activities, including those not yet members of the Council of Europe, so as to help them prevent the development of major problems related to the large-scale production and trafficking of illegal drugs and money-laundering in the region. We believe that the Group, like the Council of Europe in general, has a vital role to play in advancing dialogue and cooperation with these countries. Acting on an initiative by the European

Council in June 1990, the Pompidou Group therefore convened the first pan-European ministerial conference on cooperation on illicit drug abuse problems in Oslo in May 1991. To review the results and reinforce cooperation throughout Europe, the second ministerial conference will be held in Strasbourg on 4 February 1994. By adopting a future programme of activity, drafted in consultation with, inter alia, UNDCP, and above all by reaffirming and strengthening the political will throughout Europe to combat drugs actively, the Pompidou Group can, we hope, provide a model for regional cooperation in support of the United Nations Global Programme of Action.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Zbigniew M. Halat, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Welfare of Poland.

Mr. HALAT (Poland): Never before in its 50-year history has the United Nations faced so many pressing tasks and formidable challenges in every area of human endeavour. Drug control is manifestly one of them. The control system developed over the past century has so far failed to produce the expected results. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking pose one of the gravest threats to the world's progress, for numerous reasons, including the lack of universal respect for international legal instruments, the uneven application of control regimes and unstable political and economic conditions in different parts of the world.

At the same time, however, these negative phenomena are accompanied by numerous manifestations of the determination and political will of States to give the highest priority to combating this sinister threat. The present debate in the highest organ of the United Nations is one such remarkable manifestation.

Poland is vitally interested in participating in all international actions aimed at limiting and eventually eliminating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. We firmly believe that only the concerted action of all States, regardless of their geographical location or the degree of their exposure to the threats in question, can bring about the expected results. We must therefore appeal to all concerned to strengthen international cooperation and redouble efforts to broaden the areas appropriate for such cooperation.

The United Nations International Drug Control Programme is particularly well equipped to act as a catalyst for cooperative international effort. Established out of the consolidation of the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) secretariat and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, it now ensures effective leadership for all United Nations drug control activities. We offer our full support to the Programme and its policies, which are designed to meet the diverse needs of different regions. We hope that in view of the growing problem of drug abuse and illicit drug traffic in Central and Eastern Europe, multidisciplinary programmes applied to our region will be vigorously pursued.

The system created by international legal instruments, particularly the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, has aimed at establishing a global equilibrium between the demand for and the supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for licit purposes and at preventing their diversion to illicit channels. It is therefore of primary importance to achieve universal adherence to the international drug treaties. So far, the widest control has been effected over narcotic drugs, and consequently their distribution has been well protected from diversion into illicit markets. However, control of poppy plantations, as well as cannabis and coca bush plantations, remains the weakest element of the system. The prompt identification and eradication of illicit cultivation, as well as providing substitute crops, are therefore extremely urgent tasks for the global community.

Because of the diversity of psychotropic substances and their wide applicability, the control system instituted for that group of substances has only begun to have a positive effect. Visible progress in that area can be attributed both to the larger number of States who are now parties to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and to the fact that control levels have been set at a higher ceiling than that provided for by the provisions of that Convention.

Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/15, many countries have already extended the system of import and export authorizations provided for in article 12 of the Convention to cover international trade in substances listed in schedules III and IV of the Convention. Similarly, resolution 1991/44 initiated a process of assessing annual legitimate requirements for psychotropic substances. Once the foregoing provisions receive enough international support, it will also prove possible to reduce diversion of psychotropic substances to illicit traffic, particularly to developing countries.

The creation of monitoring and control systems to prevent diversion of precursors and chemical substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic and psychotropic substances would be another important step in the process of establishing effective international control. Following the recommendations of the Chemical Action Task Force and the guidelines issued by INCB, practical mechanisms have already been established in many countries. Since most Governments have entrusted such functions to agencies responsible for control of narcotic and psychotropic substances, strengthening those agencies in terms of personnel and financial resources has assumed special importance.

The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances introduced an array of new international control instruments to combat illicit traffic by establishing principles of penal responsibility, confiscation of proceeds derived from illicit traffic and new forms of counteracting illicit traffic by sea. Although the full effects of those actions will not be seen for some years to come, we have to begin now to think of ways to strengthen the effectiveness of the law-enforcement agencies and to utilize the existing structures, including Interpol, the Customs Cooperation Council, the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) meetings and bilateral and regional agreements, for better information exchange and more efficient cooperation in combating illicit traffic. Judicial organs will have new tasks not only because of the need for action on mutual legal assistance in investigations and prosecution proceedings, but also because of the complexity of the factual and legal material of the cases to be examined. Special attention must be given to the training of personnel at all levels.

Control of the drug supply and the suppression of illicit traffic have for many years been subjects of global concern. The third element of the triad, demand reduction, seems to have received the least international attention. Our knowledge of the epidemiological situation of drug addicts and our response to their growing numbers are still inadequate. We therefore attach major importance to developing national systems of data collection in line with the International Drug Abuse Assessment System. The elaboration of any viable system of drug abuse prevention and assistance to addicts is possible only on the basis of credible indices which accurately determine the scope of the problem.

The processes of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation differ greatly in individual countries. There is no one effective system for approaching the problem of addicts. Yet in this diversity of approaches, adapted to the specific conditions of different countries, certain experiences are worth sharing. We therefore offer our support to the UNDCP initiative on the collection of information on effective national action in that regard. The data thus collected should be the backbone of the United Nations strategy on demand reduction.

The United Nations has decided to devote the last decade of the current century to action against drug abuse. The decisions to be taken by the international community in its struggle against drugs are therefore our responsibility. Poland, too, wishes to contribute to the current debate its own experience and achievements during our country's demanding time of political and economic transformations. On 15 April of this year, President Lech Walesa signed the ratification document of the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. The ratification process of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has been considerably advanced; the new Parliament should soon adopt the ratification law on the Convention. Consequently, Poland will have become party to all legal instruments currently binding the international community. This implies that the system of national regulation will be fully adapted to international standards.

Poland has been the first Central or Eastern European country that has had to face problems of drug addiction. In the course of the last several years, we have developed an ambitious programme of treatment, rehabilitation and prevention of social pathologies. This has made it possible to slow down the growing trends of drug addiction in the late 1980s. As of late, health promotion, as an element of early prevention, has been an important factor in the process. Youth leaders have a special role to play in encouraging lifestyles free from substance abuse. To this end, a Federation of Youth Leaders for Health Promotion has been established. Their functions consist of training health promoters and training young people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Poland's national programme on drug abuse prevention is also supported by various professions, including medical doctors, psychologists and social welfare staff. We are ready to offer our experience to all interested countries and organizations.

Drug addiction in Poland has developed on the basis of raw materials available in the country, primarily poppy straw from which heroine is obtained. In order to prevent its use for illegal production of drugs, a new variety of opium poppy has been developed. It contains ten times lower morphine content than the varieties used before. By the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture, only the new variety has been cultivated in Poland for the last two years to obtain poppy seeds. We would wish to encourage other countries to consider substituting new varieties for currently cultivated poppy plants.

In recent years Poland has strengthened its cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. A special International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) mission visited Poland last December. A month ago, we jointly held with the INCB a Regional Training Seminar for Drug Control Administrators from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as from the Commonwealth of Independent States. The participants in the Seminar adopted a series of recommendations, including a proposal that Warsaw become the venue of regular training meetings of the kind for countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan.

Ms. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) (*interpretation from Russian*): Today I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries that participate in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia and Moldova.

There is no country in the world that has not been affected to some extent by the problem of drug addiction. The summary of the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1992, which we have before us, emphasizes in this context that

> "the world-wide drug abuse and trafficking situation remained grim in 1992. Drugs have become available for illicit purposes virtually everywhere in the world." (*E/1993/45, para. 2*).

Drug trafficking is one of the most dangerous forms of organized crime. The report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its thirty-sixth session states, *inter alia*, that

> "drug-trafficking criminal groups were becoming more professionally organized, ruthless, well-financed, difficult to penetrate and prone to violence." (*E/1993/29, para. 22*)

The discussion in the Commission revealed a close link between drug trafficking and terrorist groups and the illegal arms trade. Armed conflicts and political instability in various countries and regions create favourable conditions for illicit drug trafficking. There is, of course, a reverse process as well: illicit drug trafficking undermines law and order, seriously impedes economic development, destabilizes the situation and hampers democratic transformation and the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms.

It seems that no country working alone is able to reverse this negative trend of growing drug threat. To achieve tangible results in this fight against "the global epidemic", all members of the international community have to join their efforts.

The United Nations, a focal point of the international efforts to fight drug trafficking, has to make a unique contribution in this regard. The Organization has accumulated an impressive number of ideas and initiatives in this area that should be implemented effectively at the national level. We think that these efforts would be greatly facilitated by the fundamental restructuring of United Nations activities in this area. This was seen, *inter alia*, in the establishment of its drug control Programme.

The management of the Programme has done much to turn it into an effective coordination centre dealing with all drug control issues both within and outside the framework of the United Nations. Supporting in general the steps taken by the management of the Programme, we expect that they will continue to be aimed at making United Nations activities in this area more action-oriented and better coordinated. We hope that the Programme will continue to assist the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia and Moldova in establishing and maintaining in their territories an effective drug control system.

We think that the Programme should base its activities on the concept of mobility; in other words, it should be able to respond promptly and adequately to new challenges to the international community caused by the global drug situation.

It is also important to coordinate efforts with other United Nations bodies, first of all in combating crime, in order to avoid overlapping and to achieve tangible results, making use of concerted efforts within the United Nations system.

A strengthened universal international system to control narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, based on fundamental international drug control instruments, is an important element of the Programme. We share the concern of the International Narcotics Control Board over the fact that 52 States are still not parties to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. It is hard to disagree with the conclusion in its report that there is an urgent need for the newly independent States of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union to be integrated into the international drug control system. As the summary of the report states:

> "Although the drug abuse situation in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe is not yet on a par with that of Western Europe, the transitional phase of these countries may provide traffickers with legal loopholes they can take advantage of, which could have an adverse impact on the whole of Europe." (*E/1993/45, para. 31*)

The argument concerning the need to ensure universal participation, first by integrating the newly independent States into the Treaty framework, fully applies to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The need to increase these efforts was emphasized at the recent session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Over the years, the Commission has become a highly professional forum for drug control interaction of States under the auspices of the United Nations. Its last session was no exception. The Commission, taking into account the opinion of the International Narcotics Control Board, strongly rejected proposals to legalize the non-medical use of drugs. It stressed in its report that:

> "Such initiatives would undermine the international drug control system and jeopardize the implementation of the existing international drug control treaties, which constitute the cornerstone of that system." (*E/1993/29, para. 44*)

It is satisfying that this decisive stand by the Commission was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council. The Commission's position regarding the inadmissibility of decriminalizing the abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances and its negative attitude towards the elimination of strict State control over the use of drugs are also commendable.

Taking into the account the results of the discussion in the Commission, I would like to draw attention to some of the proposals made at its session with a view to improving further the international system of control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In our opinion, we should consider in this context the idea of drafting a new unified convention merging all existing multilateral instruments in this field, which would allow us to eliminate "double entry book-keeping" in issues of control and create favourable conditions for improving the effectiveness of the activities of the International Narcotics Control Board and the international drug control system in general.

As concerns making the fight against international drug trafficking and other related criminal activities more effective, we welcome the proposal in the report transmitted by the Secretary-General

> "for the United Nations system to expedite consideration of the possibilities and options for judicial action at the international level". (*A/48/178, para. 37*)

In this context, the International Law Commission could be called upon to expedite its work on the establishment of an international criminal court which, acting on behalf of the international community as a whole, could become an instrument to ensure the punishment of drug traffickers.

The States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as Georgia and Moldova, attach great importance to the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (1991-2000), proclaimed on the initiative of Ukraine. It is important to ensure that the opportunities provided by the Decade be used in the most efficient way by promoting the wider knowledge and participation of Governments, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and public figures. The Decade provides a good opportunity for activities at the international, regional and national levels, primarily through preventing this scourge by taking appropriate educational measures and promoting a healthy way of life, which would bar drugs from schools and the workplace.

The drug control efforts of the United Nations will produce the necessary results only if they are reinforced by concrete steps at the regional, bilateral and national levels. The States on whose behalf I am speaking today are becoming actively involved in cooperation, through the Council of Europe, to fight drug addiction. It is our serious intention in Asia to participate in the multilateral interaction on these issues, including interaction under the auspices of the United Nations. Movement in that direction has already begun.

Efforts have been initiated to establish a drug control system within the Commonwealth of Independent States. Multilateral agreements concerning the fight against illicit drug trafficking and legal assistance in criminal cases have been concluded. The law-enforcement agencies have been taking measures against syndicates of traffickers. We count on the continued cooperation of the United Nations and its bodies on these issues.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Turkey.

Mr. BATU (Turkey): Due to the lateness of the hour, I shall present a shorter version of my prepared statement. The full text will be available to all delegations.

Despite drug Conventions, the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to be a global threat, often linked to terrorist activities and illegal arms trading, and call for a vigorous and concerted international response. Such a response has to be directed equally to all aspects of the problem: supply, demand, illicit trafficking, rehabilitation of users and money laundering.

The creation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) has enabled the Organization to play a central role in the struggle against drugs. However, to fulfil its mandate properly, UNDCP needs a solid and viable financial base. Considering that the annual monetary turnover of drug traffickers is $500 billion, while UNDCP has received only $13.8 million from the regular budget for the 1992-1993 biennium and $186.6 million from extrabudgetary contributions, the availability of funds remains the most important factor. Therefore, United Nations activities in drug abuse control should be granted a greater share of the regular budget and more generous voluntary contributions.

Another concern is that 90 per cent of the voluntary contributions are made by four major donors and are generally earmarked for certain projects. This prevents UNDCP from being flexible in the optimal utilization of its funds. We urge the major donors to facilitate the work of UNDCP by donating funds to be used for general purposes.

UNDCP, which was established in 1991 by General Assembly resolution 45/179, is now headed by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, who can allocate only a part of his time to this very important and challenging task. While the Secretary-General is looking into ways of reforming the United Nations and of trying to make it more efficient in order to respond to the needs of our times, we urge him to restructure UNDCP accordingly.

We also urge UNDCP to concentrate more on areas that the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), as an independent body of experts, identifies as problematic, and be more internationally oriented rather than major-donor-oriented.

Turkey, which has made substantial economic, financial and social sacrifices and is still the subject of illicit drug trafficking, faces difficulties in cooperating with UNDCP in the prevailing circumstances. We believe that UNDCP should adopt more transparent mechanisms in the preparation of projects and programmes - in response to the demands of the policy-making organs - and should cooperate intensively with donors and with countries facing drug abuse and trafficking. We also request UNDCP to cooperate very closely with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch in Vienna and seek ways of allocating some of its funds for the Branch's activities to prevent organized international crime linked to drug trafficking.

I should now like to touch upon the substantial problems relating to drugs that Turkey has faced and continues to face.

Turkey, as specified in Economic and Social Council resolutions based on subparagraph 3 of the Single Convention's article 24, is a traditional supplier country. It does not itself face a significant drug-abuse problem. However, in 1974, in solidarity with the international community, Turkey stopped the production of opium in view of the risks of diversion into illicit channels and in spite of the heavy financial and economic losses, as well as social problems, that were entailed.

This decision has also burdened Turkey with monitoring the cultivation of unlanced poppy straw as well as the complicated manufacturing and marketing problems of alkaloids. Turkey still suffers in international trade from this switch in the manufacturing process. Turkey should not become the victim of its goodwill and responsible conduct. Thus, we take this occasion to call on the licit importing countries to share this responsibility, to continue to fulfil their obligations towards the traditional supplier countries, and not to consider this subject as a purely commercial matter.

Moreover, as indicated in every INCB report, it is most necessary to maintain a balance between licit demand for opiates and their supply. In this respect, due regard should be given to the special situation and needs of the traditional supplier countries and the provisions of the Economic and Social Council resolutions supporting the traditional supplier countries.

In the same context, we should like to emphasize our support for the INCB's recommendations relating to the convening of periodic meetings between the main producer countries of opiate raw materials and the main importers.

I should also like to emphasize an issue that Turkey has been taking up in international forums for about 10 years now, namely the link between illicit drug trafficking, the illegal traffic in arms and international terrorism; 10 years ago, Turkey initially met with considerable resistance to this notion of a link. However, developments, as we all know, have proved that this phenomenon is even more widespread than we thought.

Turkey is situated along the longest segment of the Balkan route. This presents Turkish law-enforcement authorities with a formidable task in combating heavy transit trafficking. Furthermore, the changed political situation in Eastern Europe and the emergence of new States in the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia are heralding increasing variations in the Balkan route's transit and entry points to Western European countries, and are aggravating the existing problems considerably. The latest figures substantiate this unfortunate development.

We request that particular attention should be paid to these new routes and recommend the adoption of new and enforced methods of cooperating with the newly independent countries. My country has already offered to make its facilities available for close cooperation of this kind, and looks forward to the formulation by UNDCP of effective projects entailing such cooperation.

Before concluding, I should like to reiterate my Government's firm commitment to contributing to the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and its determination to cooperate with all concerned Governments and the United Nations system.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken earlier at this meeting, I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop MARTINO (Holy See): The phenomenon of drug abuse has been characterized by Pope John Paul II as one of the greatest tragedies plaguing society today. He has described the illegal drug market as a phenomenon of terrifying scope and proportions, not only because of the very high number of lives brought to an end, but also because of the worrisome spread of the moral contagion. Therefore, it is with great interest and concern that the Holy See is following the item at present under consideration, entitled "International drug control".

The spread of the scourge of drugs has reached proportions commensurate with the growing crises and general misery in every region of the world. It is distressing to see the ever-widening groups seeking this escape: victims of famine and insurrection, the urban unemployed, those trying to survive economic restructuring, the homeless, the destitute.

We are also informed that the high-risk groups are no longer restricted to out-of-school youth, street children, rural-to-urban migrants, the urban poor and the socially disaffected. Industrialized society has shattered the social and economic base of communal societies, so indigenous peoples are now resorting to drugs as a solution. Increasingly, the elderly are falling victim to the misuse and overuse of psychotropic substances, as well as overmedication and excessive prescribing, and misuse, of tranquillizers in institutions that care for the elderly.

As unemployment rates have risen, so has the incidence of drug abuse by the unemployed and underemployed. We are witnessing a tragic rise of drug abuse in a group that would already seem to have lost everything: refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons.

It is evident that individuals who are in misery and despair resort to the use of drugs because they feel they have nowhere else to turn. And the drug crisis is not simply a by-product of social ills; the drug market itself is aggravating other volatile social problems: the diversion of arms and explosives, insurrections, terrorist activities and civil wars.

While the root causes of illicit drug use are still being studied and may well vary from one region of the world to another, one can distinguish many factors that contribute to its dramatic increase. In his message to the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Pope John Paul II asserted that

> "Surely a primary one is the breakdown of the family. In addition, there is a steady weakening of traditional ways of life which for generations have passed on cultural values and given meaning to daily existence; there are increasing tensions in human relationships, rising unemployment, subhuman standards of living, fears engendered by the threat of nuclear war and numerous other social factors, not the least of which is a psychological need to escape from the hardships and painful responsibilities of life. But at the root of this evil is the loss of ethical and spiritual values. If it is true that the youth of today

> are the greatest consumers of hard drugs, then it is legitimate to ask if this is due to the kind of society in which our young people are being reared."

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his report on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, notes that the Programme calls for the identification of necessary measures to combat drug abuse at the root of the problem, giving special attention to the social causes. The report adds that

> "Several States continue to consider that the root causes lie with the individual and are not of social origin". *(A/48/286, para. 22)*

The Church acknowledges the individual's responsibility to reject the unnecessary use of drugs, and the grave culpability of the individual who engages in the illegal production of and trafficking in drugs. However, the Holy See would take issue with any contention that society, including not only Governments but also other societal institutions, has no role to play in overcoming the root causes of this crisis. In this regard, the Church clearly places a responsibility on the political community to ensure the defence of familial security and health, particularly regarding such dangers as drugs.

The United Nations system and individual members of the international community are to be commended for the many programmes being undertaken to address this modern plague. The Holy See appreciates the efforts of all Government leaders and citizens who are truly committed to eradicating the production, sale and misuse of illicit drugs and substances, recognizing that such efforts can and often do involve heroic sacrifices.

Meaningful collaboration in drug-control efforts is to be encouraged among the various agencies within the United Nations, between the United Nations and Member States, and among States themselves. We also applaud initiatives for preventive education in the home, at school and in the workplace. The emphasis this measure is receiving at the international, national and local levels must be continued, and due consideration must be given to the inclusion of instruction concerning moral and ethical values.

Other activities of the United Nations and the international community are also to be commended, in particular those directed at halting the illegal production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; rehabilitation, treatment and social reintegration programmes; and alternative development programmes.

However, many of these efforts may be hindered and indeed wasted unless the international community exercises the will to confront the issues underlying the global drug crisis. The elements of the interrelationship between the tragedy of drugs and the other crises facing the world community have been acknowledged: poverty and the related issues of excessive international debt, the restrictive international trading regime, and lack of resources and of access to markets. Each of us - individually, as States and as a world community - must begin to recognize the human dignity of every individual, and from that perspective obtain the courage to take all necessary action.

In accordance with its moral principles and teachings, the Church itself has inspired and is operating numerous centres throughout the world, striving to prevent drug addiction and to provide drug addicts with treatment and rehabilitation.

In his address to the Sixth International Conference on Drugs and Alcoholism against Life, Pope John Paul II concluded that the phenomena of the drug problem

> "cannot be combated, nor can effective action be taken for the healing and recovery of their victims, unless the human values of love and life are first restored - the only values capable, especially if illuminated by religious faith, of giving full meaning to our existence. Society cannot and must not meet with indifference the sense of being an outsider which so often afflicts drug addicts ... . Laws are needed. Facilities are needed. Bold action is required.
>
> "As it is up to the Church, then, to work on a moral and pedagogical level, intervening with great sensitivity in this specific area, so it is up to public institutions to adopt a serious policy aimed at healing situations of personal and social unease".

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

40th
PLENARY MEETING
Wednesday, 27 October 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112 *(continued)*

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.12

The PRESIDENT: The first speaker is Ms. Wilma Zafra Turbay, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, on whom I now call.

Ms. ZAFRA TURBAY (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Colombia attaches the greatest importance to these high-level plenary meetings on international drug control, which are being held within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly. We are pleased to have actively promoted this event at precisely the time when interest in the subject appeared to be declining.

Undoubtedly, this is the proper platform for the generation of effective and decisive responses from the international community to the implacable challenge that the illicit traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances represents.

Drug trafficking has acquired new dimensions and ever more sophisticated mechanisms, demanding a clear and effective response from all States in order that we may together eradicate its harmful effects on world society.

Colombia views with concern the indications of increased illicit consumption and production of and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances. We are also alarmed by the growing incidence of drug-related crimes, such as narco-terrorism, arms and explosives trafficking, the diversion of precursor chemicals and money laundering.

Despite the significant efforts of the international community, we can say - calmly, but with concern - that drugs are as great a problem as ever; the problem is made worse by the indolence of some and the inadequate application of the strategies to which we have all committed ourselves at the international level.

My country has made a special effort to strengthen its judicial system through institutional reform, including new investigative mechanisms and indictment procedures. Today we have more robust institutions that facilitate the strict application of justice within the framework of the State's modernization process.

At the international level, Colombia has participated actively in the strengthening of cooperation. We have made available to the international community such areas and means as we can, as well as the best of our human, financial and technical resources, in order to achieve a greater exchange of information and experience. In this context, I am pleased to give the Assembly confirmation of the Colombian Congress's approval in August of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in

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Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in Vienna in 1988.

The scope of drug-related phenomena is so vast that international instruments alone are not enough to overcome this scourge. Each State must adopt and implement them internally, showing genuine commitment. The outcome of this struggle will remain in doubt as long as there is tolerance for such things as the free trade in and diversion of chemical precursors; the existence of tax and financial havens for laundering illegal profits; and arms and explosives trafficking linked to drugs.

In order to dismantle the financial apparatus of the criminal organizations involved, international action must be geared towards enabling financial systems and enforcement agencies swiftly to exchange information on suspicious transactions.

Although only a small amount of illicit capital enters the Colombian economy, measures have been implemented to detect money laundering. Thanks to the joint initiative of the private sector and the State security and investigative bodies, the detection of money laundering has been made easier, both inside and outside the country, in collaboration with other Governments.

There is a clear link between illicit trafficking in arms and explosives and the violence associated with drug trafficking. The failure to control the sale and export of arms in some countries, in addition to the enormous resources of the criminal organizations, has made this one of the most profitable businesses.

The environmental degradation caused by illegal cultivation, through the indiscriminate destruction of forests, continues to cause irreparable damage to the Andean and tropical ecosystems. Furthermore, the erosion caused by this cultivation has a drastic effect on water resources, a subject of vital importance on the international agenda.

I must also mention the grave problem of the use and consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances. My country views with particular concern the sustained rise in demand throughout the world. The international community must promote an overall evaluation of demand-control and demand-prevention policies in order to develop renewed strategies. Active cooperation between States, non-governmental organizations and private sector groups is indispensable for achieving the objectives of preventing drug addiction and treating and rehabilitating addicts.

We must reinforce the legal and financial mechanisms so that international cooperation will be more efficient in its various spheres of action. These include cooperation between judiciaries to exchange information and evidence to expedite the indictment and trial of drug-traffickers; the harmonization of legislation so that there will be efficient action in matters of control and prevention and a real decrease in criminality; and technical cooperation to make possible the dissemination and standardization of strategies and mechanisms aimed at preventing and curbing such activities.

I suggest to the Assembly that the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs should meet at the highest level to make the necessary evaluations; adopt recommendations and specific measures; and design new strategies to bring greater efficiency to the attainment of the proposed goals and encourage States to show the firmest, clearest political will to implement the proposed actions.

Colombia is pleased to announce that in order to promote research in this field and put at the service of countries affected by this curse the experience Colombia has acquired over recent years, the creation of a Centre for International Studies and Research on Drug Trafficking, where we hope, with other interested countries, to enhance knowledge and improve strategies for combating this sinister scourge of humanity.

I should like to take advantage of this important occasion to express the Colombian Government's recognition of the work being done by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which is the coordinating body for international cooperation within the United Nations system. However, we also want to emphasize the importance of endowing that Programme with the resources necessary to ensure its timely and effective operation. The current level of its budget allows only for the carrying out of pilot programmes in certain areas and countries, whereas the problem calls for universal attention.

Once again, in this battle in which we are all engaged we exhort all Governments to express their political will, realistically and with tangible commitment. What is at stake is the well-being and survival of mankind. We must devote ourselves with determination to building a society founded on the human being as a rational, creative and feeling entity who seeks to approach the new millennium in peace and harmony.

Our hopes and the future of our children depend on the responsibility with which we act in the present.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. MIN **(Myanmar)**: I should like to begin by expressing the satisfaction of the delegation of Myanmar at seeing you, Sir, preside over the high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly on drug-abuse control. In your opening address to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session you rightly emphasized the need for a collective vision to turn individual dreams into reality. In no other human endeavour is there a more compelling need for such vision than in our efforts to rid the world of the scourge of illicit drugs.

In the past two decades the use of illicit drugs has spread at an alarming rate, affecting the individual, the family, the community and society in nations around the globe. The illicit production, distribution and consumption of drugs have become a most serious problem, one that represents a global challenge requiring a global response. It is therefore encouraging to note that there is today a growing awareness in the international community of the need to take a firm stand to overcome the threat posed to mankind by the drug problem. The holding of these high-level plenary meetings is a manifestation of that awareness and the leadership role that the United Nations plays in the field of drug-abuse control. My delegation is confident that these meetings will give us an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in 1990 as well as to enhance international cooperation.

Myanmar believes that concerted action will be required at the international and national levels to meet the challenge posed by illicit drugs. In this regard, Myanmar has been shouldering its responsibilities both at home and abroad. In parallel with the anti-narcotics campaigns being carried out within the country, we have also been participating actively in international forums dealing with illicit drugs, from the special session of the General Assembly devoted to narcotic drugs to the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat. As earnest of our commitment, we acceded to the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in June 1991. Subsequently, in January 1993, the Myanmar Government enacted the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, which harmonizes its statutes with the major international treaties to which it is a party. It also eliminates loopholes in earlier statutes with respect to corruption, asset seizure and conspiracy.

In keeping with the 1990 Global Programme of Action, Myanmar has been cooperating with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and neighbouring countries to expand activities aimed at reducing the supply of illicit drugs and eventually eliminating opium cultivation in the country completely. In June 1992 the Myanmar Government took the initiative of signing agreements with the People's Republic of China and the UNDCP, as well as with Thailand and the UNDCP, in order to collaborate in addressing the problems of illicit production, trafficking and abuse. The Governments of Myanmar and Laos have also agreed to cooperate in this regard. As delegations are aware, the Governments of Myanmar, China, Laos and Thailand yesterday signed here in New York a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNDCP. Myanmar also signed a drug-control agreement with India in April of this year and aims to work out a similar agreement with Bangladesh.

We are confident that those cooperative efforts at the subregional level will result, not only in the effective elimination of opium cultivation and trafficking in narcotic drugs and chemicals used in the refining of heroin and the production of other illicit drugs, but also in reducing the demand for local consumption and concurrently addressing the problem of HIV-AIDS infection associated with intravenous drug abuse.

Myanmar has been unrelenting in its war against the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs since it regained its independence in 1948. In recent years efforts have been stepped up, and my Government has been implementing a nation-wide drug-suppression programme. We realize that the illicit-drug problem is complex and that it must be addressed comprehensively. Accordingly, our national programme is multifaceted and covers the whole gamut of drug-control activities, from law enforcement and education to crop substitution and medical treatment.

In the past it has been our strategy to focus mainly on the destruction of poppy fields, sometimes carried out manually and at other times by aerial spraying of herbicides. While such efforts have had some success in addressing production and trafficking problems, the practice of shifting cultivation and drug production along and across border areas, coupled with the rough terrain and mountainous topography, makes effective control difficult, with the result that the overall impact of these measures has been limited. The situation has been aggravated by the presence of heavily armed drug-trafficking groups in the drug-producing border areas.

With the advent of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, a new approach was adopted. Recognizing that the drug problem cannot be divorced from the problem of poverty, my Government launched, in 1989, a new programme to raise the living standards of the national races in the border regions in order to narrow the gap between the city dweller and the rural folk. The new approach is aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the local populace by raising their awareness of the insidious effects of drug abuse and the human misery and suffering that opium and other illicit drugs leave in their wake. The cornerstone of the new approach is the provision of alternative sources of income to the farmers who depend entirely on the cultivation of the opium poppy for their livelihood. Accordingly, emphasis is now being placed on programmes designed to generate alternative incomes, such as crop substitution, livestock breeding, trade promotion and mineral exploration.

In parallel with its anti-narcotic-drug programmes, the Government has been implementing since March 1989, on a priority basis, a programme for the development of border areas and national races. A separate Ministry was established in 1992 to ensure the development of the border areas and to eradicate poppy cultivation.

The new approach of the Myanmar Government is in keeping with the strategy recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action. It provides for, among other things, the stimulation of rural development in opium-producing areas as another key element of the opium-elimination strategy. As stated in the report, one common feature of the producing areas is that they are relatively remote, mountainous and not well integrated into the mainstream of national economic and social development. The aim of the rural development programmes is to reduce the isolation of such communities in those areas by improving the transport and communication infrastructure and social services, as well as by introducing alternative crops for their livelihood. The Myanmar Government has been implementing just such a programme, with the objective of improving the transport and communication infrastructure in the Shan, Kachin, Rakhine, Chin and Kayah states and in the Sagaing division, which are the constituent units of the Union of Myanmar bordering on neighbouring countries.

The two parallel programmes of my Government - one on narcotic drugs and the other on development - complement each other. Significant results have been achieved. As a result of the constructive measures taken by the authorities, and reflecting their complete trust and confidence in the policy of national reconciliation espoused by the State Law and Order Restoration Council and in its goodwill and sincerity, 10 armed groups have now returned to the legal fold. They are now cooperating with the Government in promoting peace and prosperity in their respective regions.

Representatives of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and other visitors to Myanmar have been given the opportunity to acquire firsthand knowledge of the illicit-drug problem in the country. United States Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Chairman of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, and a number of his colleagues from both the United States Senate and House who visited Myanmar in the course of the current year saw for themselves recent Myanmar Government achievements in the field of narcotics control. I have already mentioned some of those achievements, but, given their significance, allow me to repeat them.

Myanmar signed drug-control agreements with China and UNDCP, and also with Thailand and UNDCP, in 1992. In April 1993, Myanmar signed a drug-control agreement with India and has already agreed to sign one with Laos. Yesterday, here in New York, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Governments of Myanmar, China, Laos and Thailand and UNDCP. The main objectives of the agreement are to eliminate opium-poppy cultivation through economic-and-social-development programmes, eliminate trafficking in narcotic drugs and chemicals used in refining heroin, and reduce the demand for and local consumption of narcotic drugs.

In cooperation with international partners, the Myanmar Government arrested 12 alleged traffickers earlier this year on a conspiracy charge under its new statute. The Government enacted a new drug law in January 1993 to harmonize its statutes with the major international treaties to which it is a party. Drug task forces in the country have been increased from 5 in 1988 to 16 in 1992. Additional task forces will be formed as required. Statistics for 1992 show that seizures of heroin by the authorities rose by nearly 50 per cent while opium seizures rose by more than 35 per cent over the previous year's totals. Seizures of heroin are nearly the same as those reported from Thailand, notwithstanding the fact that the United States has placed Myanmar on the list of countries decertified as a non-cooperating country in the fight against narcotics trafficking.

The Myanmar Government and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) have carried out an opium-yield study based on samples taken from representative areas of the country. This is the first study of its kind in the country. Regarding cooperation between the Myanmar authorities and the United States DEA, I should here like to quote the following passage from the report of the head of the DEA Country Office in Yangon:

> "During the entire period of DEA presence in Myanmar, there is not a single instance in which a cooperative DEA/Government of Myanmar investigation has been compromised. There are very

> few countries in which DEA agents are assigned that can make such a claim".

The Myanmar authorities have responded fully to DEA requests for investigative assistance. In this regard, the same official states:

> "In some instances, the Government of Myanmar provided more information than was actually requested in the first place".

The endeavours of the Government of Myanmar to develop border areas are registering significant progress. One manifestation of such progress is the return to the legal fold this month of the Kachin Independence Organization, one of the largest armed groups in the country. Significantly, representatives of the Kachin nationals stated at a press conference held at United Nations Headquarters on 14 October that they are resolved to end poppy cultivation in their state by 1995.

From what I have stated, it should be quite evident that the Myanmar Government has taken serious measures to address the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. A head start has been made. However, we are aware that only through concerted international efforts can the world overcome the challenge posed by illicit drugs. The untold suffering and misery that drug addiction wreaks upon our societies and nations demand that we work together to put an end to drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Venezuela

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) represents the concerted efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to combat the production, sale, demand for, traffic in and illicit distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances.

It will be possible to appreciate the full scope and value of the global strategy of international action, which is given concrete form in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, only with the passing of time and to the extent that all States incorporate in their legislation and internal policies the general guidelines laid down in the instruments adopted in recent years. I refer in particular to the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities of 1987 and to the Global Programme of Action of 1990. Unquestionably, the full implementation of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was initiated by my country, is a central element of this action.

Venezuela approves of the important work being done by the United Nations, and particularly by the Executive Director of the UNDCP, Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, in the fight against drugs.

It is a fact that the harmful effects generated and propagated by the consumption of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities have heightened social and economic problems and increased violence within many of our countries.

Our awareness of the fact that, far from improving, this situation is growing more serious requires us to continue examining its causes and its effects on the socio-economic order of our peoples so that we may take the most appropriate corrective measures.

The geographical situation of Venezuela - its advantageous position on the sea, extensive border areas and means of communication - continually exposes it to the risk of being used by drug trafficking organizations as a transit country.

Transit operations are not confined to the use of our territory as a connecting point in international drug traffic. Because of the capacity of drug traffickers for offence, transit operations also undermine border security, the integrity of foreign trade, the stability of the financial system, the civic and moral integrity of our officials and citizens and our public health, as well as national sovereignty in its fullest context.

The so-called transit countries are not only used for the transport of illegal drugs; they are also used in the transport of the chemicals employed in the clandestine manufacture of drugs and in the transfer of the capital generated by such activities, which, once it is rendered legitimate, is returned to the State where the criminal organization is based.

In spite of the dangerous implications of this, the special situation of transit countries has been an aspect of the general problem of drug trafficking that is rarely considered by the international community. To ensure a more effective worldwide struggle against drug trafficking, we must analyse and examine in depth the situation of these countries and the turmoil they experience as a result of the negative impact of the drug problem on their social and economic structures.

For these reasons, Venezuela believes that the problems of transit countries must be viewed in a broader context. We are pleased that the draft resolution we will be adopting at the end of this debate takes this concern into account.

Venezuela's awareness of its position has prompted us to extend our efforts at prevention, control, supervision, investigation and full international cooperation to the multiple phases of international drug traffic in transit, and to associate the problem with security and national defence.

Internal drug trafficking operations cannot be considered entirely independently of the situation generated by transit traffic. The largest drug seizures continue to be made from operations on international drug routes. This does not allow us to draw any conclusions about the internal situation, particularly not if we take into account that the various operations taking part in the transit process do not always correspond to the levels of criminal organization based within the territory. These operations may be dictated by attempts to avoid repressive activities in a given region.

As a result of intensified vigilance along our borders, investigations of certain commercial activities in neighbouring States and of the transit of persons, among other actions carried out by the police, have made it possible to intercept certain international connections which sought to use our territory to transfer illegal capital outside of the country.

This investigation, which is being carried out now and is still at a confidential stage, is an important precedent for the establishment of the crime which doctrine and the new Venezuelan law identify as the legitimation of capital, and for the definition of a more precise outline of illegal drug transit operations.

On the basis of our past experience, we believe it important that, within the activities of prevention and community mobilization, a place be made for the re-education of drug users who are being rehabilitated, with a view to increasing their job skills as an effective means of reducing the demand for illicit drugs.

The attraction of trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances lies in the possibility of obtaining large profits in a short amount of time. The two columns on which this business is founded are supply and demand, which are so closely related that it is almost impossible to consider the problem and its consequences without taking the importance of both into account.

In recent years, national and international actions have focused primarily on combating supply. This has, to some extent, diverted attention away from effective policies for putting an end to illicit demand. In numerous international meetings and forums, the growth of that essential element of the problem has been noted, as well as the preference of traffickers for importing and distributing drugs in those places where their market value is highest.

This disturbing picture reminds us of the need to promote large-scale strategies to prevent the clandestine movement of drugs in those States where there is a great demand for illegal drugs. A shrinkage of the market would be effective, since without profitable places to sell the product there would be no incentive to produce and cultivate it. At the same time, this would alleviate the situation of the transit countries.

This key aspect of the problem demands that we take into account paragraph 4 of article 14 of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the Vienna Convention) and give priority to those programmes aimed at eliminating or reducing illicit demand.

To prevent the diversion towards unlawful uses of chemicals and precursors legally used by industry, Venezuela has, since 1985, been implementing an administrative regime of supervision and control of the commercial operations which import and export these products.

The recent reform of the special drug law of 1984 was approved by the Venezuelan legislature to improve and expand the earlier regime, adapting it to the stipulations of the 1988 Vienna Convention and to the guidelines contained in the model law drawn up by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission and approved by the Organization of American States. In accordance with this legislative reform, import and export operations must be registered and must obtain a special permit. The procedure by which these authorizations are granted is subject to the guidelines set out in the Vienna Convention.

To ensure the effectiveness of the import control established by the country, exporters must, in turn, exercise greater vigilance and supervision over their exports and must also speed up the system of exchange of information on commercial operations involving these products.

In general, we would consider the expansion of the voluntary system of estimating quantities required for industrial use - similar to the system established for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances - a significant stride forward in drug-abuse control.

The drug problem should not be considered solely from the individual points of view of producer, transit, consumer or money-laundering countries nor yet exclusively in a global or universal way. A regional orientation is also required, which would take advantage of the capacity for cooperation among the countries of a given region affected by this scourge and of the potential for coordination in defining joint policies and actions.

One step in this direction could be, for example, for the countries of the American continent and the Caribbean to agree on the objective of converting the region into a drug-free zone by the first decade of the next century. We realize that this is an ambitious objective, but if all those concerned - producer, consumer, transit and money-laundering countries - were to define a joint plan, even if we had not achieved the objective by the date mentioned, at least we would have made considerable progress by developing a concerted and coordinated programme to combat the problem of drugs in all its dimensions. Similar initiatives in other regions of the world would also be beneficial.

My country is firmly convinced of the essential role of international cooperation in the fight against the drug problem. Venezuela resolutely supports all initiatives and actions the international community has undertaken along these lines.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the next speaker in the debate, I should like to inform the Assembly that, in view of the large number of Member States whose names are still inscribed on the list of speakers, the plenary meeting this afternoon will go beyond 6 p.m., until at least 7.30 p.m., as an extraordinary measure and thanks to additional conference services made available to these high-level meetings. Once again I appeal to delegations to try to stick to the limits prescribed.

The General Assembly will continue and conclude the debate on this item tomorrow afternoon.

I now call on Mr. Zainuddin Abdul Bahari, Director of the Anti-Drug Task Force of Malaysia.

Mr. BAHARI (Malaysia): Our meetings here mark yet again the international community's common resolve to address collectively the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. This series of meetings is significant and timely as the war against this scourge is far from over. According to reports from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB), the situation remains grim and we are fighting losing battles in certain regions. Our meetings therefore provide the opportunity to take stock of these developments and to dedicate ourselves to the onerous tasks ahead of all of us. To achieve decisive results, efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking require a comprehensive, continuous, balanced and multidisciplinary approach.

My delegation shares the belief that the status of international cooperation to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking needs to be re-evaluated. The profusion of multilayered, interrelated issues and participants has made the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking an extremely difficult and complex undertaking. We need to better coordinate our work in order not to lose sight of our objectives, priorities and strategies while maintaining our cohesiveness in fighting this menace. In this regard, the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Global Programme of Action should be continuously reviewed and updated.

It is imperative that the United Nations take the lead role in rationalizing the work to avoid duplication and ensuring coordination and complementarity. The report of the Secretary- General on "Implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control" (A/48/329) mentions only a few agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Obviously other agencies need to take an active part in this fight.

UNDCP was formed to fulfil the need to address the drug menace collectively, with the United Nations playing a central role of coordination. In playing that role, the United Nations must make its activities consistent with and complementary to the efforts and commitments of national Governments. The UNDCP should endeavour to cooperate with, and optimize the activities and actions of, States rather than doing the job for them. The UNDCP should also take its guidance from the CND, the main policy-making body. The CND itself, which has been expanded, should now be more active and effective.

The development of national master plans to implement the Global Programme of Action is a good starting point for international cooperation in this area. To be effective, the Programme should be implemented in tandem with national policies and strategies. Malaysia commends the UNDCP for its initiatives at regional and subregional levels to assist nations in the implementation of the Programme, particularly in the development of national master plans. Malaysia developed a sectoral master plan for anti-narcotics measures as early as 1985, and we reiterate our readiness to render the necessary assistance to the UNDCP in formulating strategies in developing such master plans.

In conjunction with international and national strategies, societies must be sufficiently well informed and sensitized so that they can respond positively to these initiatives. Malaysia supports the thrust of the approach envisaged by the Global Programme of Action for an international strategy encompassing the reduction of illicit supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; the curb on demand through prevention of drug addiction and treatment; rehabilitation and social reintegration of addicts; the suppression of illicit manufacture of and trafficking in drugs; and the regulation of the international market in drugs for medical and scientific purposes.

Prevention is a key element in the fight against drug abuse. The Secretary-General's report mentions two important principles relating to demand reduction. The first principle involves the question of a demand-reduction programme which requires the involvement of all sectors of society and the international community. The second principle focuses on specific vulnerable target groups. Sufficient and relevant legislation must be enacted and adequate resources must be allocated as prerequisites to any sustainable implementation of demand-reduction programmes.

Malaysia's own experience confirms that drug-demand reduction measures have an important role in the war against the scourge of drugs abuse and illicit trafficking. We are also convinced that for these measures to be effective the commitment of national Governments is required. The provision of legislation for the screening of suspected drug addicts enables us to estimate the magnitude of the drug-abuse problem. This provides a sound basis for the formulation of demand-reduction strategies. It is equally important that confirmed drug addicts be subjected to mandatory treatment and rehabilitation. Compulsory and effective treatment can make a substantial contribution to reducing the demand for illicit drugs.

These measures demand substantial financial allocations, which may be beyond the financial capability of many countries. Our review should therefore look into alternative financing for these activities, particularly the question of the involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Institutionalizing collaborative efforts in demand reduction at the regional levels is important as well. Malaysia strongly believes that the establishment of a mechanism to deal with demand-reduction issues is long overdue. In this connection, it is recommended that the UNDCP establish regional meetings structured along the lines of the Meetings of the Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA).

The recent Asian HONLEA meeting in Seoul brought to the fore a disturbing observation. There appears to be a decline in the focus on drug issues among national Governments. It is ironic that this should be so, particularly in view of the growing emergence of drug-related problems such as the transmission of the HIV virus, AIDS, and money laundering. The international community should show greater commitment to and determination in enforcing measures to control and prevent the drug problem.

The eradication of illicit drug production is another area requiring early international action, given the general acceptance of the linkage between poverty and drug production. The issue is not as simple as that relating to crop substitution, as it involves the question of social development, cultural particularity and the security of the poor peasants who are forced to cultivate coca or opium. Until and unless the enormous scale and implications of this problem are appreciated, all well-intended measures will prove to be ineffective.

The cornerstone of the United Nations effort to eradicate drug production should be based on providing a practical alternative means of subsistence to drug growers. One interesting proposal by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) calls for debt swap, whereby part of the official debt payment of heavily indebted countries would be set aside for alternative development activities. In welcoming this proposal, we wish to emphasize the need for clear guidelines to ensure that the objectives are met.

The suppression of illicit drug trafficking is another relevant aspect in the fight against drug abuse. Unfortunately, over the years, there has been an overemphasis on and an inequitable allocation of resources to this particular aspect. Most countries in their initial efforts focused primarily on law enforcement and interdiction. The United Nations itself has been and remains influenced by this line of thought, which has manifested itself in its overemphasis on drug-law-enforcement measures. This has perhaps been inevitable because of the initial perception that if the flow of drugs can be stopped, the drug problem can be eradicated. The truth, however, is that suppression of drug trafficking and distribution is not the panacea to the drug problem. Today, no country can claim to have succeeded in reducing the inflow of drugs. There has been no reduction in the illicit production, manufacture and consumption of and trafficking in drugs. Indeed, on the contrary, there has been an increase in the production of drugs. There is thus a need for a balanced and equitable approach by UNDCP in its programmes and activities, without veering predominantly towards law enforcement.

We agree with the observation in the reports of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and UNDCP on the need for member countries to show their commitment to the fight against drug abuse by ratifying and acceding to the three major international instruments on this matter: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Participation will ease national control efforts and enable countries to participate in international activities. This is vital in the case of the newly independent countries, whose non-participation in these instruments will make them targets for drug traffickers. Malaysia ratified the 1988 Convention early this year.

National laws need to be updated in compliance with international drug treaties. It goes without saying that countries should have an adequate legal framework to deal with the drug problem because the lack of basic drug laws would impede international cooperation. This is particularly relevant to the newly independent States, such as those in Europe and the former Soviet Union.

United Nations specialized agencies, including UNDCP and the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and international law-enforcement organizations need to interact and share, and collaborate in efforts to cope with organized-crime organizations and their involvement in terrorism and gun-running financed by revenues they obtain from the illegal drug trade. Malaysia has always advocated the need to standardize the treatment of drug-related offences. No criminal should have the liberty to seek refuge or safe haven in countries that impose minimal punishment for crimes related to drugs, whether it be for illicit trafficking or for money laundering. There must be a commonality of penalties that are meted out, allowing for sufficient deterrence of the perpetrators. Malaysia has the harshest of penalties, which is a reflection of our strong commitment to working towards a drug-free society while demonstrating our equally strong abhorrence of drug-related offences.

Before I conclude, allow me to reiterate Malaysia's position that we need to continuously review our joint efforts in fighting this menace. The threat from drug abuse and illicit trafficking is constantly changing in form and in intensity. We must be ahead of the criminals in our enduring task to defeat them. We must continue to hold on to our beliefs and principles. We must resist the temptation to engage in unilateral action to change the shape of the problem by considering the legalization of drugs or their classification as soft or hard drugs. Finally, we must strengthen our collective international determination and efforts to fight this scourge against humanity successfully.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on Mr. Carlos Larreategui, Attorney-General of Ecuador.

Mr. LARREATEGUI (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Before I begin my statement, I should like to express to the representative of Panama my delegation's sorrow at the passing of his Foreign Minister, Mr. Julio Linares.

Ecuador has come to this great gathering - in which we consider it a great privilege to participate - convinced that we have a singular opportunity to meet, together, the challenge posed by drug trafficking, which, together with terrorism, violence and corruption, threatens social peace and democracy and seriously jeopardizes the future of our peoples.

It is possible that at this stage of the proceedings everything, or almost everything, has already been said on the subject. Perhaps all that will be new in my words will be the way I speak them. Thus, and in order to comply with your recommendation, Sir, that we be brief, I shall confine myself to setting forth in broad terms what my country is doing and plans to do on the subject that has brought us together and what it expects from the international community.

My country's geographic situation has, regrettably, made it a link in the chain of the illicit transit of drugs between South America and the United States and Europe. In our region, Ecuador is a bridge between the producers of coca and the processing and distribution centres. At the same time, the chemical precursors used in refining centres pass through Ecuador and return via the same route with processed drugs on their way to consumer markets. Moreover, my country is an important locus for the laundering of illicit money.

My country's complex position notwithstanding, the national Government has responded firmly and soberly to the criminal activities threatening not only the moral fibre of society but the integrity of its legal, social and public-order institutions. The reaction of our competent authorities to these challenges has been swift and harsh. At the level of police action, we have imprisoned the main perpetrators of these crimes and seized their property - of which they have a great deal. In the past year, we have confiscated some 7,079 kilos of cocaine, 306 kilos of coca paste and 216 kilos of marijuana. At the administrative level, we have set up a National Council for the Control of

Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances, over which I have the honour to preside. This autonomous and independent body is responsible for the prevention of the manufacture and the control and inspection of chemical precursors and, through the Ministry of Health, the rehabilitation of drug users.

Furthermore, the Government of Ecuador, under Mr. Sixto Durán Ballen, has adopted a firm and resolute policy in its tireless fight against illicit drug trafficking. This position was reiterated at the recent summit meeting of the leaders of the Rio Group held in Santiago de Chile. To that end, we have mobilized all the human, technical and material resources available to the nation.

This year, we have adopted a five-year national plan to prevent and control the use of drugs, with the following objectives: to reduce supply and demand; to make total prevention a daily exercise in order to make our population physically, psychologically and socially sound; to include preventive education in the normal and remedial educational curriculums, backed up by a wide-ranging plan for training teachers; to protect each Ecuadorian as the greatest and best source of intellectual, material, historical and cultural wealth; to commit ourselves to involving the voluntary sector, particularly non-governmental organizations, in programmes and projects combating drug abuse; to coordinate actions with specialized bodies in order to buttress, at the technical and operational levels, the agencies that are implementing the national plan; to adopt programmes to promote alternative crops and for industrializing and marketing beneficial products that can counteract drug production, consumption and traffic; and to rescue ethical and moral values in the individual, the family and society.

In the legal field, Ecuador has signed and ratified many multilateral instruments to do with drugs, and I should like to point out that Ecuador was one of the first countries to ratify the 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which has been incorporated into the Law on Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances that Ecuador promulgated on 17 September 1990. On the bilateral level, Ecuador has signed a number of conventions with the countries of the Andean area and with Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico, and also with Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

My delegation welcomes the Organization's initiative of holding these high-level meetings in order to alleviate the concern felt by many countries that the subject of international cooperation in the war on drugs would be put on the back burner. In this regard, we agree with Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, who reminded us yesterday that drugs are a world-wide threat at least as great as any other of the ills that are afflicting humankind at this time of crisis.

In this connection, Ecuador is convinced that this difficult enterprise requires States to stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity. For its part, my country will continue to be assiduous in adopting internal measures to combat the manifold adverse and corrupting manifestations of the drug traffic.

Along these lines, we also believe that there should be an equal degree of commitment on the part of the consuming countries, which must view this great crusade as a great campaign in which the principle of equal responsibility is unequivocally recognized. This is why it is becoming ever more urgent for enough resources and international assistance to be allocated to help us fulfil the obligation to eradicate this ignominious scourge, an obligation that our sacred duty towards the future of our peoples imposes on us.

As many other speakers have emphasized, the war on drugs requires resolute and coordinated action by all the world's peoples, and in which there is no room for indifference. My country will continue undaunted in the struggle it has begun, and will offer its cooperation to other States, in so far as we can, in order to ensure that the objectives we are determined to achieve are indeed fulfilled.

The moment demands less rhetoric and more action.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on General El Sayed Lotfi Gheith, Assistant Minister of the Interior of Egypt.

Mr. GHEITH (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It is my great pleasure and honour to participate in this high-level meeting on behalf of General Hassan El Alfy, Egyptian Minister of the Interior, who sends the Assembly his sincere compliments and best wishes for this General Assembly meeting.

This meeting reflects the international community's determination to continue its all-embracing struggle against the narcotics evil. It also demonstrates the sincere desire of our peoples and Governments to expand our drug combating activities and to devise more effective techniques in dealing with this problem, which continues to be one of the gravest issues both at the national and international levels. We are confident that this meeting will be able to formulate effectual recommendations which, when implemented, will contribute to the cause of peace and security the world over.

Egypt was one of the first States to recognize the gravity of the problem of narcotics. To Egypt's credit is the fact that it was the first State in the world to enact the first law to criminalize hashish cultivation and importation, in 1879 and the first to establish a law enforcement agency, in 1929, specializing in combating illicit drugs, namely the Anti-Narcotics General Administration, over which I now have the honour of presiding.

Egypt has participated effectively in promoting international efforts to combat and control drugs through accession to various international conventions in this respect.

Egypt has continued to play an active role in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs since its inception in 1946, and is also a member of its subcommission for the Near and Middle Easts.

At the regional level, Egypt plays a vital role in both the Arab and the African spheres. It focuses on cooperation and coordination with the various States concerned in combating the illicit traffic in drugs in our region as well as the transit trafficking targeting other regions of the world. Egypt has organized and/or participated in numerous conferences for Heads of Arab and African drug law-enforcement agencies, and our joint efforts have resulted in prosecution of a number of significant international cases in Egypt as well as in a number of other States.

In the area of training, Egypt contributes greatly to training officers of Arab and African drug law-enforcement agencies, and participates in implementing United Nations strategy for training in the region. Our efforts in this direction have received a considerable boost when Cairo was chosen, in 1990, as the headquarters for the first United Nations Regional Training Centre established in Africa.

At another level, we also cooperate with a number of friendly States, particularly Federal Germany, in organizing joint courses for African officers.

Within the parameters set by the principal goal of this meeting, namely the assessment of our efforts and achievements in the area of international cooperation over the past few years, I should like to present Egypt's views and efforts, primarily in respect of the implementation of the 1988 United Nations Convention and the Global Programme of Action.

In the field of criminalization and punishment, Egypt enacted in 1989 a new law, for which the 1988 Convention was the main source of many of its provisions.

Concerning the confiscation of narcotics assets, Egyptian legislation permits confiscation of the proceeds of drug related crimes, and of any land or means of transportation used in committing such crimes. Egyptian authorities accord a high priority to cooperation with all the States concerned in this field within the framework of international conventions and national legislation. We hope to benefit, in the near future, from the training and consultative services as well as from the technical assistance that will be provided by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to Member States in the context of the efforts aimed at implementing the Global Programme of Action.

In the area of extradition, Egypt cooperates with other States, both in terms of extradition and also in the exchange of prisoners, in consonance with the norms of international law, with the reservation concerning extradition of foreign prisoners in drug related cases, namely that extradition should take place after service in Egypt by such prisoners of the full sentence passed by Egyptian courts.

Egypt sometimes allows drug consignments to enter its territory or to transit under surveillance by its law enforcement agencies. We have used this method successfully in arresting traffickers and in prosecuting several significant international cases, in cooperation with police and customs authorities of a number of Arab, Asian and European States, as well as the law enforcement agencies of the United States of America.

With respect to the control of precursors, chemicals and solvents used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, we have put several such substances under customs and security controls with the ultimate aim of controlling all other substances listed in tables I and II of the 1988 Convention.

In connection with transit traffic in narcotics, Egypt cooperates with friendly States in joint programmes to fight narcotics transit traffic operations; those programmes make use of a detailed and accurate database.

The delegation of Egypt appeals to the United Nations and all its Member States to take urgent and effective steps to support combating activities in Africa and to redouble their contribution to that effort - which, so far, has not exceeded 6 per cent of United Nations drug-control outlays in 1992, a very modest contribution indeed given the grave indications that Africa is being increasingly targeted in the area of transit trafficking. I should also like to stress the importance of extending assistance to Africa in alleviating the effects of certain problems that exacerbate the drug situation in the continent, such as unemployment, indebtedness, drought and desertification. Such problems should be addressed through the creation of better opportunities for development in Africa and through opening the markets of affluent States to Africa's products.

With respect to detection and eradication of illicit cultivation, Egyptian law enforcement agencies continue to vigorously deploy efforts aimed at detecting and eradicating illicit drug cultivations with the help of the assistance extended to us under the long-term United Nations programme scheduled to run until 1995. We have signed the latest of the relevant conventions of that programme in Cairo on 28 September.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to convey our sincere appreciation to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and its Executive Director, Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, for the active support that has enabled us to strengthen our efforts aimed at reducing the area of illicit cultivation and to limit the flow of drugs into Egypt and other countries.

On the other hand, we hope that, in coordination with the competent United Nations organs and with developed countries, the UNDCP will adopt an international programme that uses advanced technology for the accurate and timely detection and eradication of illicit cultivation in various regions. Such a programme should be devised in consultation with producer States and must embody restraints that would safeguard the national security and sovereignty of such States while taking into account environmental and population safety considerations.

Our aspiration after a drug-free world will be realized neither through good intentions, no matter how sincere, nor through country-specific efforts, no matter how effective they may be. The attainment of that goal requires a sincere dedicated collective effort through the mechanisms created by international instruments, in a new spirit that transcends formalities and narrow interests and that opts decisively for carrying through the much needed international struggle against this horrific scourge.

I seize this opportunity to appeal to the General Assembly to call upon world leaders to intensify their mutual cooperation in facing up to all the threats and challenges that confront the international community, especially those posed by drug trafficking and terrorism. Creative action in this respect is certainly the best legacy we can bequeath to our children and grandchildren - and to all mankind, which yearns for a better, brighter, more secure and prosperous world.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on His Excellency Mr. George Ioan Danescu, Minister of the Interior of Romania.

Mr. DANESCU (Romania) *(spoke in Romanian; English text furnished by the delegation)*: I wish on behalf of the Romanian Government to convey our best wishes to all participants in these important meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking. We are most favourably impressed by the international community's efforts and by the firm commitments by Heads of State or Government to expand those efforts into coordinated activities and to set priorities in the international fight against the illicit production, consumption and trafficking of drugs.

As a result of the political, economic and social changes achieved during the transition period in Romania, the institutions of the rule of law have been created; hence, human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully observed and respected, without discrimination, according to international standards.

The new direction recently promoted in our society in the fields of law, the economy and politics have been perceived in various ways. For the majority of the population, these began a process of genuine freedom, but for some people they represented new possibilities for criminality, with drug-related crime holding a prominent place.

The opening of our borders led to an enormous growth in the number of persons and vehicles and the quantities of goods entering and leaving Romania. That opportune situation has been exploited by networks of drug traffickers who use Romania as an important bridge linking East and West.

In addition to Romania's special geographical position, we must also consider the present situation in the former Yugoslavia. Owing to the ongoing conflict in that country, the hard core of drug trafficking has shifted to the second segment of the "Balkan route", as it has been called - which includes Romania. That is how criminal organizations avoid losing large quantities of drugs that net them substantial sums of money.

In that connection, I must note that the huge sums of money generated by drug trafficking attract Romanian citizens as well. Foreign criminal organizations send representatives to try to make connections among Romanian criminals; this promotes the organization and internationalization of drug trafficking.

Another category of Romanians involved in this kind of crime are individuals who left the country many years ago and settled abroad. Some have been recruited by international networks, and serve as their couriers or intermediaries. Over the years, they have accumulated large sums of money which, after December 1989, they invested in Romania, where they returned to live. The mafia-like organizations to which these people belong are stretching out their tentacles to our country; there are indications that some of the dirty money produced by drug trafficking is being laundered in Romania.

But in spite of all that, we may safely say that no market for drugs has been created in Romania, and that Romania remains free of drug addicts. The only individuals identified as drug addicts have been foreign residents or foreigners in Romania for one reason or another.

Given such considerations we may assert that Romania is merely a transit country for drugs bound for Western Europe, while at the same time it is being used as a turn-round point for the cocaine coming from South America.

Apart from what I have mentioned so far I should like to add that the Romanian legislation on drugs which regulates the activity of the competent authorities was adopted in 1969, a fact which somewhat hinders their activity. A new draft law on narcotics has been worked out and submitted for discussion and passage to Parliament. We can also say that we have taken an important step forward by ratifying the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the Vienna Convention of 1988.

Fully aware that good results in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking can be achieved only on the basis of close cooperation with similar authorities in other countries, we have made efforts to secure such cooperation with organizations from Europe, America and Asia.

The exchange of information and the material support granted by the United Nations and other organizations from the above-mentioned continents were of the utmost help to us in the struggle against drug trafficking in our country.

As to the amount of seizures in Romania, they range between seizures of several grams and seizures of several tons. While in 1991, 35.82 kilograms of drugs were seized, in 1992 the amount was 30.521 kilograms, and since January 1993 the amount of drugs seized has been 11,396.165 kilograms. Among the most frequent drugs seized in 1993 we should mention cannabis, with a capture of 11,183.160 kilograms.

We are also witnessing an intensification of the activities carried out by criminal organizations from South America, which are diversifying their methods of introducing into Romania cocaine bound for Western Europe, with the participation of criminals from Canada, the United States of America and Romania.

As to the licit production and the legal trafficking in narcotic substances and products and of precursors and essential substances, strict controls operate both in the institutions that produce medicine containing narcotic substances and in those producing opium poppies for medical use. All these steps that have been taken jointly by interested bodies and organizations from Romania explain why there have been no cases of the diversion to criminal activities of drugs and precursors from licit production sources. For the same purpose, measures have been taken by interested ministries to authorize the importation and exportation of the chemical essentials and precursors that could be used for the illicit manufacturing of drugs.

Given this package of regulations we can firmly state that in Romania there are no clandestine laboratories; and no synthetic drugs have been discovered so far.

Although we have no drug addicts among Romanian citizens and therefore no deaths from overdose - at least not recorded lately - the Romanian authorities have been confronted with a relatively new phenomenon that is spreading fast. This is the inhaling by some young children and teenagers of volatile substances, which are not drugs in the proper sense of the term, but which, in our opinion, could lead to the taking of genuine drugs. With respect to such persons educational steps have been taken in conjunction with educational bodies, teachers, charitable organizations, schools and medical institutions.

The quite striking proportions of the drug problem require the elaboration of new strategies, new objectives and international cooperation mechanisms which, while respecting and observing the sovereignty of States, should act more efficiently against the international trading operations of those persons who make fortunes by means of illegal drug trafficking and who endanger the stability of many societies of the world.

Romania, a signatory of all United Nations programmes and resolutions aimed at developing international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking, intends to put into effect the recommendations and conclusions of this session of the General Assembly so as to limit the effects of this scourge as much as possible.

***The PRESIDENT** (interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on Mr. Jorge Ramón Valdés, Attorney-General of Panama.

Mr. VALDES (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Mr. President, the delegation of the Republic of Panama wishes to pay its respects to you and hopes that your presidency will be successful.

Seen as a socio-economic phenomenon, drug consumption has been reflecting growing tendencies that are extremely disquieting, and our children, our youth and our national identity have been deeply affected by this dreadful scourge, in spite of the efforts to combat it.

The Government of the Republic of Panama, at all levels, has resolutely undertaken the implementation of a policy aimed at putting into practice measures to prevent, combat and curb drug abuse, narcotrafficking and the use of our financial and trade system for money-laundering, while at the same time making efforts to prevent the legitimization of activities arising out of narcotrafficking.

We are convinced that through preventive education we shall be able to combat this dreadful scourge and steal a march on crime, and that by educating youth and adults we shall achieve a deeper betterment of the human being and enhance self-esteem, thereby creating true social awareness against drugs by erecting a cultural barrier that will protect our population from the harmful consequences of drug trafficking.

We have also designed new national strategies, taking into account primarily the development of integrated prevention policies by mobilizing our communities through massive education of students at primary, secondary and university levels. We have also developed programmes for specialized training for civil servants, members of civic clubs and the staff of private enterprises throughout the country.

With regard to activities aimed at curbing the illicit drug traffic and related crime, we would point out that the Public Ministry - in an effort to strengthen the activities of the Specialized Secretariat for Drug-Related Crimes in the Attorney-General's Office, the offices in charge of summary proceedings and the Judicial Technical Police, which under the law now comes under the Ministry's supervision - created and installed in all judicial districts throughout the country specialized sub-secretariats for drug-related crimes. These entities are responsible for any activity with regard to summary proceedings, including issuing search warrants, for drug-related crimes. Their work has already produced results throughout the country, especially in the provinces which, because of their geographical peculiarities and the development of economic activities, are choice locations for drug-processing.

Knowing full well that for an effective fight against this scourge it is necessary to have international cooperation, the national authorities have carried out a considerable number of operations jointly with the anti-drug agencies of the United States, INTERPOL and the German police, among other agencies, and have succeeded in confiscating large quantities of drugs and other items connected with this traffic.

With regard to international legislation, we must make special mention of the fact that the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the Vienna Convention) was recently submitted to our legislative assembly for ratification and is being debated. Thus Panama continues to reaffirm its policy of international cooperation with a view to the eradication of drug trafficking and the consumption of illicit substances.

We wish to point out that the treaty between the Republic of Panama and the United States of America on mutual legal assistance in penal matters was ratified by Panama by law 20 of 22 July 1991 and we hope it will enter into force when it is ratified by the Congress of the United States and formalized by an exchange of notes for the mutual benefit of our two countries. At the time of a revision of the Special Law on Drugs, we concluded that it was necessary to reform some of its articles and to incorporate new types of crime with a view to regulating illicit conduct not envisaged in the current legislation.

In view of all this, the Public Ministry, making use of the legislative initiative granted to the Attorney-General of our country, has submitted to our parliament a draft law designed to reform the current legislation on drugs. The draft makes provision for restructuring the penal standards in the field of international drug trafficking. We have incorporated provisions with regard to aggravating circumstances in the purchase, sale and transshipment of drugs; regulation of the procedure for the delivery of drugs under surveillance and undercover operations. It is intended that goods seized because of a connection with drug-related crimes be used in campaigns for the prevention of crime, rehabilitation, and the suppression of drug trafficking. In addition, we have established two offices of the public prosecutor which specialize in drug-related crimes and which would have competence and jurisdiction throughout the country.

All these changes are aimed at the formulation of a special law on drugs, the fundamental purpose of which is maintenance of the struggle against drug trafficking through the preventive functions of the penal law.

As regards the laundering of drug-related money, we can see that every day we are confronted by new methods used by drug dealers to separate their income from illicit sources from their principal source, through the creation of complex financial transactions which give the appearance of legitimacy to their funds. To deal with this situation, the Government of the Republic of Panama has in its judicial system a number of measures for enforcing the controls for the prevention of the laundering of money derived from drug trafficking. Under the special law on drugs there is provision for sanctions against all those who, in one way or another, participate in the crime of money laundering.

Another measure taken by the Government to curb this activity is Cabinet decree No. 41 of 1990, which requires banks to obtain proper identification of their clients and to have them provide information about the sources of deposits and the purposes of cash withdrawals amounting to more than $10,000.

Our Supreme Court has issued various rulings and judicial orders imposing on the people involved in these operations an obligation to supply all the required information to the penal authorities on a given bank account while making it clear that our country respects the confidentiality of certain bank accounts. However, this has nothing to do with the concept of secret accounts.

To this end and in order to maintain a salutary financial centre, the members of the national banking community have issued a number of agreements concerning the identification of financial transactions involving cash, cheques, travellers cheques and other payment orders with blank endorsements. The Bankers' Association of Panama, which brings together almost all the banks in the country, has laid down rules that prevent members from making improper use of its services.

The Republic of Panama, which is based on the principles of protecting life, strict legality, respect for legal institutions, both basic and operational, both national and international, is determined to use whatever means are available to put an end to the terrible scourge of drug trafficking.

In the face of this phenomenon, which is changing constantly, the objectives of the Republic of Panama may be stated as follows: first, our primary responsibility is to protect the physical, mental and emotional state of the people affected by chemical substances; secondly, we must protect the national political, social, economic and financial structures against organized crime, whose participants try to use our geographical position and our financial and trade system for their own purposes; thirdly, we must strengthen the links of cooperation and international solidarity through bilateral and multilateral conventions to curb drug trafficking in all its manifestations.

We should like to sum up the position of Panama in this great struggle by the civilized world against the increasing threat of drug trafficking, in the words: Panama is fighting! And it is fighting despite the fact that the drug barons are trying to use the country, because of its location, as a springboard for their deadly cargoes. But we are not daunted by economic limitations or transitory political changes. Panama is organizing. We are legislating and are perfecting our police and investigation activities. We have strict regulations against money laundering. All our efforts are directed against drugs. We are complying literally with conventions and treaties, and we are beginning to see positive signs which should be an example and model for other nations that have to contend with similar problems. It is with pride that we say that Panama is fighting and is achieving its goals.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Roan Perera, Secretary to the Legal Committee of the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board of Sri Lanka.

Mr. PERERA (Sri Lanka): The delegation of Sri Lanka welcomes the convening of these high-level plenary meetings on international drug control to examine the status of international cooperation against drug abuse and drug trafficking. The according of special importance to the subject and this stocktaking exercise by the international community are timely. The question of international drug control does indeed demand high priority, given the political, economic and social dimensions of the problem and the grave threat that it poses to the health and life of our people, particularly the youth of our countries.

Moreover, new and alarming dimensions of drug trafficking have emerged in the post-cold-war period. The ramifications of the nexus between narcotics peddlers, terrorists and the illicit arms trade now go beyond the socio-economic sphere and pose an ever-increasing threat to peace and security within and between nations in many parts of the world. The residue of the excessive armament inventories of the cold-war era has resulted in open arms bazaars. All types of armed groups, including powerful commercial interests that drive the illicit drug trade, have access to this sophisticated military hardware. Drug peddlers, terrorists and gun runners seem to have joined forces to create elaborate international networking arrangements to provide the funding and the logistics for this deadly trade in illicit drugs and arms.

The results of this self-sustaining cycle of violence and social disintegration are only too evident in the increasing number of terrorist and drugs-related conflicts around the world. International preventive diplomacy and efforts in the area of national political reconciliation will not be fully successful so long as the flows of illicit arms and of illicit drugs support each other. These act as a formidable counterforce to political efforts, at national and international levels, towards the prevention or resolution of conflicts. The terrorists will have no incentive to turn away their financiers and enter the democratic process of political expression, and the drug dealers will have no incentive to discard their "valued customers", unless the international community takes concerted and integrated action against this twin evil of narco-terrorism and the illicit arms trade.

Mr. Kabir (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The growing complexity and the multifaceted dimensions of the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking therefore require a carefully coordinated policy and a plan of action at the national, regional and international levels.

The Government of Sri Lanka recently adopted a national plan on drug abuse and drug control which takes into account the national, regional and international aspects of this question. At the national level, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board is the principal agency in Sri Lanka dealing with the question of drug control. The functions of the Board relate to all aspects of prevention and reduction of drug abuse, the control of the supply of drugs and the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts. The Police Narcotic Bureau, which is a specialized unit within the police department, deals with suppression of illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

On the aspect of demand-reduction programmes, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board has taken a series of measures focusing on special target groups such as educational institutions. We are conscious of the need to implement demand-reduction programmes in a supportive environment with the active support of parents and community leaders. At the regional level, during the first week of this month Sri Lanka hosted a regional seminar, under the auspices of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), to work out modalities for the prevention and reduction of drug abuse in the South Asian countries.

With regard to the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts, the Dangerous Drugs Control Board implements a programme of treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations which are active in the field of drug control. Draft legislation has also been finalized by the Board's legislative committee to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug offenders. The law envisages treatment and rehabilitation of drug offenders through institutions managed by the Board as well as through private institutions which are subject to supervision by the Board. The draft legislation also provides for a court order for treatment and rehabilitation in lieu of a penal sentence, in appropriate cases. It also provides for voluntary submission to treatment and rehabilitation.

In the field of international drug control, Sri Lanka is a State party to the principal international legal instruments. Sri Lanka recently ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and also the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. At the regional level, Sri Lanka is a party to the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was adopted in 1991 and which entered into force on 15 September 1993. The SAARC Convention reaffirms and supplements at the regional level the principal international legal instruments in the field of drug control.

A coordinated programme of international cooperation is essential for dealing with the problem of narcotic drugs, given the transboundary dimensions of this problem. The 1988 United Nations Convention provides a comprehensive legal regime to combat the problem through the establishment of drug offences as grave criminal offences, the incorporation of the "extradite or prosecute" principle and the related concept of universal jurisdiction in relation to drug offences and measures to promote international judicial cooperation to address such acts of criminality. We also note that the draft statute for the establishment of an international criminal court formulated recently by the International Law Commission covers the offences under the 1988 United Nations Convention, although further elaboration is required on some elements of the matter relating to the Court's jurisdiction.

A legal workshop for South Asian countries on the implementation of the 1988 United Nations Convention, sponsored by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), is currently being held in Colombo. We are very grateful to UNDCP for sponsoring this workshop in Sri Lanka; it will no doubt benefit the Asian countries. A well-coordinated programme of cooperation at the regional level would undoubtedly supplement and strengthen measures of international drug control.

The development of mechanisms for the exchange of information and intelligence related to drug offences forms an important part of the international strategy to combat the problem. Sri Lanka took the initiative within the SAARC forum for the establishment of a mechanism for enhancing the effectiveness of law-enforcement action in the region and for maintaining channels of communication for the secure and rapid exchange of information between the concerned agencies of Member States. A Regional Drug Offences Monitoring Desk has now been established; it is located at the Sri Lanka Police Narcotic Bureau. A directory of national focal points of concerned agencies of SAARC countries has also been finalized. These measures for mutual assistance already implemented in the SAARC region could form the basis for wider cooperation, as envisaged under the United Nations Convention.

Sri Lanka, for its part, stands ready to enter into cooperative arrangements with countries of other regions on the question of drug trafficking. Only a comprehensive network of arrangements at the bilateral, regional and international levels could meet the threat posed by international drug trafficking, which, unless effectively countered through a well-coordinated global plan of action, would end the political, economic and social fabric of all nations.

Sri Lanka is therefore pleased to support the draft resolution on international drug control, which provides a framework for enhanced international cooperation in drug control and the fight against drug abuse.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Before taking up the subject before us, I should like to express, on behalf of the Central American Community, our deepest sympathy to the people, the Government and, especially, the Mission of Panama, and to the family of His Excellency the late Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, Mr. Julio Linares, who died early this morning in this city, where he had come to take part in these meetings of the Assembly.

The Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama have decided to participate jointly in dealing with in one of the most important aspects of international relations, one that has negative effects on the social and economic development of all the nations of the world, be they industrialized or developing.

The impact of drug crime, its scope and its invasion of our societies upset and erode our basic social, economic, cultural, political and legal structures, thus endangering the very political stability of nations and bringing about an unbridled increase in violence, corruption and insecurity.

The seventeenth special session of the General Assembly was devoted to the international fight against the abuse of and illicit trafficking in drugs, and it culminated in the adoption of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action on international cooperation against the production, supply, demand, and illicit trafficking in and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Last year the General Assembly decided to devote four plenary meetings this year to an evaluation of the progress made.

The Central American countries believe that the activities of the international community in the struggle to eradicate this problem have been effective, albeit of limited scope. On the one hand, sophisticated monitoring and communications systems have made possible seizures of such substances worldwide. On the other hand, the underlying causes of production and unlawful trafficking in drugs have not been properly tackled.

The poverty, destitution and despair of large portions of the population, particularly in rural areas, create a fertile field in which the cartels and other organized groups can devote their substantial profits to the production of illicit crops. This has a negative impact on the environment because of land clearance and the use of herbicides and other chemical substances that find their way into rivers and lakes, or stay in the soil.

Many countries have been adversely affected by political conflicts, geopolitical changes, pandemics, recessions and economic restructuring, all of which have upset the usual harmony of society. Drugs have come to be viewed as promising a temporary escape. Worse still, the production of and traffic in illicit substances are the major source of funds for armed groups seeking political power through fratricidal wars.

The unfavourable international economic situation plays a preponderant role in increased drug production. The prevailing theory of supply and demand and free-market trends in international trade have led to a drastic fall in the prices of legal export products. In Central America, for example, the drastic drop in the price of export commodities has caused a deep economic recession. The industrialized countries have begun to implement trade measures that restrict the import of bananas into their markets. Some of our countries have been threatened by the application of foreign labour laws, to the detriment of our legal production. The countries involved are also the market *par excellence* for our drugs, for, again in accordance with the law of supply and demand, consumers in the industrialized countries are prepared to pay excessive sums for narcotics, but do not want to pay a fair price for lawful products. A long-term response to the problem of drug trafficking would be to increase the productivity of and income from conventional agriculture. We must promote dynamic agricultural development on the basis of viable international agreements guaranteeing fair, remunerative and stable prices for the producers of licit goods. This is a topic the General Assembly must now take up seriously.

The Central American countries have tackled the problem of narcotics in the businesslike manner it demands. The Central American Presidents have referred to the need to promote international as well as subregional cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking. They are well aware of the special geographical position of Central America, which international cartels have taken advantage of, using the region as an air and maritime bridge for drugs *en route* to northern markets. They know that the region's technological and financial resources are too limited to carry out more careful monitoring of drug trafficking. It is time people understood the immense seriousness of the problem.

Nevertheless, the Central American region has increased the financial resources it devotes to the international effort and has initiated plans and programmes on prevention, investigation, intelligence gathering and information. We are also putting in place systems to monitor, control and register air, sea, land, lake and river traffic. Efforts are being made to locate clandestine landing areas, aircraft refuelling points, warehouses and raw materials. We are working to locate and destroy poppy and marijuana crops, as well as other similar crops for which Central America provides fertile soil.

The Central American countries have cooperated with international agencies and organs and have held seminars on the technical assistance the United Nations International Drug Control Programme can provide. They have participated with other interested countries, particularly the United States of America, in efforts to combat drug trafficking, in strict compliance with the principles of international law respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, and have signed extradition agreements that make it possible to apprehend and try drug lords. Central America rejects, however, the extraterritorial application of the laws of other countries on its territory and any attempt to pursue such policies, whether within or outside the region.

Central America believes the international community must reaffirm the priority given in the Global Programme of Action to the prevention and reduction of the illegal use of narcotic substances, for which purpose sufficient resources must be allocated. At the same time, we consider that much more information and additional financing are required to help the region wage more energetically the war against illegal drug production and trafficking.

The sophistication of international cartels and the overall international economic situation have resulted in limited achievements for the Global Programme of Action and national and subregional programmes. Crop substitution programmes have not been effective enough. Governments in the North seem to be concentrating on attempting to persuade Governments in the South to halt the cultivation and processing of drug-related crops and to prevent their sale abroad. That approach, however, ignores the fact that the driving force behind the drug trade is its enormous profitability, owing to the increased demand in the North. That problem has not been effectively tackled.

The Central American countries are parties to the international drug-control instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Their Governments have received for consideration a plan to establish a Central American standing commission on the eradication of the production, trafficking, consumption and use of narcotics and psychotropic substances, which was drawn up at the ninth Summit meeting of Central American Presidents, held in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, in December 1990.

It is hoped that the proposed Central American commission will begin to function at an early date, because we are convinced that its activities could significantly promote cooperation between the countries of the region in this struggle. The convention creating the commission is to be signed at the fourteenth Summit meeting of Central American Presidents, to be held in Guatemala at the end of this month.

Last February an anti-drug conference attended by Central American Heads of Government was held in Belize City to consider coordinating regional efforts to combat the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs. In its Final Declaration it deplored the drug scourge and reaffirmed the commitment to make every effort to prevent the region's being used for such purposes. It expressed the conviction that only through regional efforts could a solution be found to the problem created by the use of the region for illegal production, trafficking and consumption.

The Central American Governments reaffirmed on that occasion the importance of coordinating their efforts with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and with the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Costa Rica.

The Central American Presidents who met in Panama stated:

> "We reiterate our vigorous condemnation of the production of, trafficking in and illicit consumption of drugs. We reaffirm our commitment to make every possible effort to prevent our countries from becoming a base for drug trafficking, as this leads to actions perpetrated against society and violates the fundamental human rights of individuals. At the same time, we agree to intensify regional cooperation and international cooperation to eradicate this scourge".

Domestic legislation has been improved in each country where this was needed, and in some cases new legislation has been enacted. In Costa Rica, a National Drug Council was established, and the Ministry of Justice adopted a drug programme. The Assembly of El Salvador enacted a law governing drug-related activities, thus introducing certain changes into older legislation. In September, the anti-drug division of the civilian national police was instituted. It has established relations based on cooperation and exchange of information with the countries in the area: Colombia, Mexico and the United States.

In Guatemala, a Commission Against Drug Addiction and Illicit Trafficking was created. A law on drug-related activities has been enacted, allocating more resources to this problem, and norms, methods and procedures were adopted to implement justice speedily and efficiently. In Nicaragua, a National Drug Commission has been created. The National Assembly has already received for study a draft law, on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and penal legislation on this subject does not allow the release on bail of any criminals involved in drug trafficking.

The Central American region is well aware of the need to adopt programmes and measures, on a regional basis, in order to treat, rehabilitate and bring about the social reinsertion of persons affected, particularly young people, and is also aware of the need for adequate educational programmes.

The Central American countries are convinced that without an improvement in the economic conditions of the region, their efforts to combat drugs will have only a very limited effect. And that is why we would emphasize once again the need to enhance international cooperation and establish an ongoing programme in our countries, including programmes to deal with the production and marketing of alternative agricultural products. We need an improvement in terms of trade, we need investments that help our economies, a reduction in our debt, and we need support for our economic and social development, respecting all the while the environment and the culture of our peoples.

The international community, and in particular the United Nations, must serve as a central forum to promote cooperation and improve general living standards. The fight against narcotics must be given top priority. It must move ahead and in this way, our planet can be shared in a peaceful and healthy way by one and all.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Police General Chavalit Yodmani of Thailand.

Mr. YODMANI (Thailand): It is a great pleasure and honour for me to address the Assembly today.

These special meetings of the General Assembly reaffirm the priority that the United Nations attaches to international drug control. Our task as high-level representatives of various Governments is to review the progress made to date and inject the process with the political will that is so essential to the movement towards eradication of the problem.

The problem of the abuse and illicit trafficking of drugs, as we all are aware, has dramatically increased in scope and complexity. Despite drug-control measures, the demand for and illicit production and trafficking of drugs continue to rise. It is painfully clear that serious problems related to the use of drugs have emerged, among them HIV and AIDS resulting from intravenous drug use and violent crimes caused by drug addiction and the drug trade. The diversity of the drug problem is also reflected in the diversion of chemicals used for the illicit production of drugs, and its complexity is due to the huge profits possible in the illicit drug trade.

Thailand has fully committed itself to the fight against this drug menace. What we have done is self-explanatory. Thailand is a Party to the 1961 Convention amended by the 1972 Protocol, and also to the 1971 Convention. Even though we have not yet acceded to the 1988 Convention, we have already put many of the measures provided in the Convention into action. We are proud to say that much of what we have done is in line with the strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline and the Global Programme of Action. We have set our priorities within the context of a clearly defined and achievable national strategy which provides the proper balance between the demand for drugs and a reduction in the drug supply.

Thailand would like to commend the United Nations for its adoption of the Global Programme of Action, which outlines the integrated strategies on drug abuse control. However, the implementation of the Global Programme of Action can be achieved only through the concerted efforts of every nation in translating the words of the Global Programme of Action into concrete action. We are of the view that to help implement the Global Programme of Action, technical assistance and financial support from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), in cooperation with other United Nations specialized agencies, should be provided to the relevant countries, particularly the developing ones, for the drafting of their master plans on drug control. The necessary support and the provision of adequate resources would enable the countries to effectively implement their programmes.

The subregional concept initiated by UNDCP is another laudable example of international cooperation in the fight against the scourge of drugs. Thailand fully supports UNDCP's initiative, because we believe that one country alone cannot effectively overcome the problem. Countries that belong to the same geographical region should join hands and work together to eliminate this pervasive evil.

In this belief, Thailand has been working closely with all the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in a concerted effort to fight against drugs. Thailand also initiated the First Ministerial Conference on Cooperation on Drug Abuse Control between the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand in March 1992, which resulted in a Joint Declaration of the three countries stating their firm commitment to alleviate the drug problem. To strengthen cooperation between the three countries and to translate the Declaration into practical action, a Three-Year Narcotics Control Assistance Plan was drawn up by the Royal Thai Government to provide training in the fields of both supply and demand reduction to officials from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The implementation of this Plan will begin next year.

Moreover, Thailand participates actively in the UNDCP subregional project between Myanmar and Thailand, and yesterday we signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the People's Republic of China, Thailand and UNDCP, which will serve as a cooperative framework on narcotics control in that subregion. This will open a new chapter of concerted efforts between all parties concerned.

The war against drugs will never be won if demand reduction efforts are overlooked; new kinds of drugs will always arise to replace old ones. Sometimes substances that are not even narcotic drugs are used, such as glue and other volatile substances. Thus, the problem lies mainly with the individual. Demand reduction should help the individual resist those destructive habits and encourage him or her to live a healthy and useful life in society. Most importantly, this effort should be supported by the people, as they are the ones who know and face the problem. The Royal Thai Government has tried to encourage greater participation by the people in our anti-narcotics programmes, and the results are quite satisfactory.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that we have come a long way and still have many roads to travel and hills to climb, but the knowledge that we are not alone makes this journey much easier. So I would take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the countries that have cooperated with us and helped us in our narcotics-control efforts. I would also like to reiterate Thailand's firm policy against drugs. We pledge to do our best and stand ready to work with all countries to keep the momentum going, because if we are to defeat this global menace, we must be united in purpose and act together.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Eamonn Doherty, Senior Drugs Coordinator of Ireland.

Mr. DOHERTY (Ireland): Let me begin by saying that I fully support the speech made by the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium on behalf of the European Community.

Let me also say what a signal honour it is for me to be present here at these high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly on drugs. I strongly believe that by adopting a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action in February 1990 we gave an important impetus to the international community to take positive action in the fight against a major scourge which threatens the very fabric of all our societies, a disease which threatens the future of our young people and thus the future of mankind.

During Ireland's presidency of the European Community in 1990 I had the privilege of chairing the first meetings of the European Community's senior coordinators in the fight against drugs. This group was composed of the personal representatives of the Heads of State and Government of the twelve member States of the European Community, and its coming into being underlined the seriousness with which these senior political figures viewed the problem of drugs. During the first half of 1990 we drew up and presented to the European Council in Dublin the draft of the European Plan to Combat Drugs. This Plan was finalized in December 1990 under the Italian presidency, and forms the cornerstone of European policy in the fight against drugs.

Under the Irish presidency we also put in place a very important group in the fight against drugs, one which I am happy to say carries the name of the Dublin Group. In bringing together the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, Norway and Sweden with the European Community and its member States and the United Nations International Drug Control Prograame (UNDCP), it provides a forum for informal consultations which play an important role in directing the policies and actions of the countries involved. In order to respond positively to situations in different parts of the world, regional groups and within them mini-Dublin groups were established in major capitals in order to analyse and respond effectively to the drug problem in different regions and to enhance the overall understanding of the problem.

However, I believe that, despite the important role which we can play in the European Community and through groupings such as the Dublin Group, in the fight against drugs we need to coordinate our activities on a world-wide basis through the United Nations if we wish our efforts to work effectively towards the eradication of a problem which, though it may take different forms in different countries and regions of the world, still remains a problem we must all face in common. The drug problem is a classic example of a global challenge. Despite the efforts we have all made nationally, regionally and internationally, and despite our many successes, I do not believe we can say that we have seen any major improvement in the drug-abuse problem.

Whilst we have been fortunate, insofar as the drug problem in Ireland is small by international standards - due in small part to the close family structure of our society - it is a matter which has always been accorded a high priority by successive Irish Governments. Both enforcement and rehabilitation measures are kept under constant review, and we have seen an increase in seizures of drugs and in the number of people charged with drug offences, particularly importation and trafficking. In 1992 there was an increase of 13 per cent in the number of people charged under the Misuse of Drugs Acts. At the same time, there was an increase of 20 per cent in the number of drug seizures. However we are very conscious at all times that arrests and seizures will not by themselves provide the answer to the problem; for that reason we pay close attention to the important issues of health care and rehabilitation.

Despite all these measures, we in Ireland have seen a gradual deterioration in the level of abuse, particularly of cannabis resin. In line with our priorities we are at this point in time critically examining the national policy on all aspects of the problem including the adequacy of the resources available to the various enforcement, education and other agencies involved.

Whilst we will continue to enhance our national programme, it is only through a concerted international effort that we can hope to make any impact on the scale of the problem facing us. It is a problem which is so widespread that we regularly find further areas into which its tentacles have reached. We must not look to the problem of production alone but to the reasons for production. We must not look to the problem of consumption alone but to the reasons for this consumption.

We must take account of the economic and social factors which play an important role in many of the producer countries. When we talk of alternative development and crop substitution, we must ensure that what we are offering is a real alternative and a substitute crop for which there is a real market. We must also look to how we deal with the traffickers, who have great wealth and power and who have a vested interest in ensuring the production of the illicit crops which have made them so powerful.

We, in determining our actions, must take account of the fact that drug trafficking, from the patterns which we have seen, appears to consist of tightly knit, highly organized networks that span across countries and regions throughout the world. Seizures which have taken place appear to represent only a small percentage of what is being trafficked as evidence suggests that they rarely affect market prices. This is a clear indication of the enormity of the problem which faces us.

When we turn to the problem of consumption, we must turn our attention to the underlying socio-economic factors. In our Western world we find drug addiction problems both among the poor and socially deprived of our populations and among the relatively well off. We must try to understand and come to terms with the broader deprivations of our time that give rise to the drug abuse problem in the different strata of society. Above all we must emphasize the important and central role of drug awareness education. This education needs to take place in the home as well as in the school and, I believe, it must begin at a very early age if we are to enable children to resist the pressures of peer groups and be alert to the dangers which are facing them. We must pay attention to the problems of drugs and crime and the relationship between them. We must look at all times to the relevance and efficacy of programmes for the rehabilitation of drug abusers.

However, while we must tackle the problems caused by consumption in our societies, we must also tackle the root cause of the problems. To do this we must tackle the problems of drug trafficking and drug pushing. We can succeed in this area only through ensuring effective coordination and cooperation between our law enforcement agencies and between our criminal justice systems. In this endeavour the United Nations has an important role to play in helping to bring about the best possible conditions to enable this cooperation to exist on a broad international scale. Within Europe we are seeking to improve this coordination and cooperation through the establishment of EUROPOL. We must never lose sight of the fact that we are engaged in a battle against organizations which operate on a multinational basis and which have huge financial resources. The structure of these organizations, and in particular their ability to launder money in major money markets, needs to be tackled comprehensively.

As I said at the beginning of my intervention, we are facing up to a global problem which threatens the very fabric of our society. In this endeavour, unless we pool our information, our technology, our research, our understanding and our resources to deal with it effectively, we may stand guilty of leaving a pernicious heritage to generations yet unborn. Despite the obstacles we may encounter, we can never afford to give up the fight. A huge burden has been placed upon us and we must, each of us, find the courage and the strength to challenge it and to win.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Brigadier General Benny Arad, Executive Director of the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel.

Mr. ARAD (Israel): On behalf of my delegation, I have the honour of addressing the General Assembly on a topic that unites us all: the global fight against drug abuse.

During the last decade, narcotics consumption has become one of the most serious threats against our society, endangering our most valuable national resources: our community members and our youth.

Israel's drug-fighting policy, like that of many countries, strives to balance the vast demands of the struggle with the limited resources of the national budget. In spite of restricted resources, efforts are being made to address the social issues confronting Israeli society, amongst them the drug problem.

The Anti-Drug Authority (ADA), as the national bureau for planning, coordination and promotion of activities, deals with a subject of an interdisciplinary nature, while our main focus is on reduction of drug supply and demand. The Authority's mandate includes formulating comprehensive nationwide policies in all areas of the fight against drug abuse and promoting and expanding the network of intervention services in the various areas of this battle. These are coupled through the coordination of all the efforts of Israel's governmental, non-governmental and public agencies in the campaign against drug abuse.

During the period of its existence, the ADA has formulated a national strategy against drug abuse based on broad interministerial coordination and cooperation.

Israel, through the ADA, has invested great efforts in the improvement of interdiction methods along the borders and at the points of passage along them. The ADA is promoting the application of more severe sentences for drug offenders and especially drug dealers. There is also an increase in the number of prosecutions of such offenders. Prevention programmes are already conducted in a growing number of schools, and the intention is to reach all schools and all grades in the future. Many activities have been initiated and implemented in the field of public education. The treatment and rehabilitation infrastructure has been improved. Research on drug abuse problems is encouraged, and many academic programmes for the training of skilled personnel to combat all aspects of drug abuse are under way.

Despite Israel's limited resources, the ADA, under clear instructions from the Prime Minister, continues tirelessly to wage the war against illicit drugs, and in this spirit, the Government of Israel has each year since 1989 increased its budget allocation for ADA's activities.

The need to fight the drug menace is haunting Israel as well as many other countries. Prevention, treatment and law enforcement all require not only great efforts but also huge resources. The drug users and hard-core addicts need the right combination of facilities, treatment, rehabilitation and other resources that it is our duty to provide.

Israel is located in a region known as a centre of world drug trafficking. Indeed, there is no production of illegal drugs of any kind in Israel itself. However, in our part of the world, the intensive drug activities along our borders, together with drugs imported to Israel from other countries, pose a tremendous threat to the fabric of our society.

While the prime responsibility in fighting illicit drugs lies with each State, it is also a point of departure for binational, regional and multinational cooperation. The unique balance of strength and weaknesses that exists in each country's war on drugs correlates with the adequacy of its national policies and programmes in the functional disciplines of treatment, prevention, law enforcement and interdiction. These elements, which lend themselves to the position of contributor or beneficiary on the international level, are interrelated with decisions taken by the United Nations and thus catalyse the work of development and progress in terms of global cooperation and striking a balance in the allocation of resources.

Israel is ready to cooperate with every nation in its region and outside it in the fight against narcotics and other drugs. Such cooperation is especially vital considering that Israel and its neighbouring countries are situated so closely to the drug- production centres and their smuggling routes. Israel and its neighbours are being used not only as drug-transit countries, but also as drug-trade and local-consumption targets.

As the prospects for peace in the Middle East grow, we have to remember that peace is made not only between Governments but also between people. The time has come to establish lasting cooperation and information exchange links between neighbouring countries in every aspect of drug warfare, along with frequent exchanges of operational information leading to successful drug interdiction by respective drug-enforcement entities.

We call on our neighbours and the world community to unite with us in the campaign against narcotic drugs as part of the efforts to promote peace in our region and all over the world. We urge our neighbours to establish a regional committee, open to all countries of the Middle East region, to combine resources, efforts and expertise and present a unified front against drug abuse and its implications.

Israel is eager to participate in the implementation of programmes that will reduce demand and inhibit the supply of narcotic drugs. Only by combining and coordinating our efforts can we create the conditions essential to eradicating this global scourge. It is our responsibility to reduce the severity of this plague, which crosses all national boundaries, and the untold suffering it causes.

We share the view that drug enforcement alone cannot provide the ultimate solution to the drug problem. However, along with other long-term measures for demand reduction, drug-law enforcement through effective interdiction will play a key role in the immediate, short- and medium-term drug warfare as long as disruption of the drug-trafficking routes remains a major means of cutting down the supply of drugs.

Israel is a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and its amendment. Israel is also a party to the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. We have taken all the necessary steps to implement these Conventions. We are also proceeding to amend our domestic legislation to ratify the 1988 Convention as soon as possible.

The State of Israel has made sincere efforts to establish international cooperation on a binational as well as a multinational level. Since 1991 we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and agreements of cooperation with the United States of America, France and Chile. We are trying to activate an existing agreement with Italy. Likewise, we hope to promote such agreements with other countries to stimulate binational cooperation and exchange of information on methods against drug abuse. Israel invites the international community to share the knowledge it has accumulated in all the domains of the fight against drugs.

We believe that the United Nations should adopt a stricter approach to the use of heroin, which is the main drug threat in most countries. We encourage the establishment of a central data system in each country to keep track of intervention methods and list individuals who are known as drug users or offenders. In addition, we recommend the establishment of an international information centre for exchanging information on intervention methods that are applied in the various aspects of fighting drug abuse.

Since ADA's establishment, we have cooperated with the United Nations drug-fighting bodies and taken all the necessary steps to achieve the drug-fighting goals set by the United Nations. Since 1990, representatives of the United Nations programmes - starting with the former Director of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the President and representatives of the International Narcotics Control Board - have visited Israel and gained first-hand knowledge of our commitment to preventing and fighting drug addiction and trafficking. These representatives had the opportunity to see at first-hand the drug-fighting scene in Israel and to learn about our methods and special programmes. They were impressed by Israel's intervention programmes and the high quality of our professionals. We are looking forward to establishing mutual working relations with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and to giving professional assistance to other nations.

The Government of Israel wishes to stress its total and unwavering commitment to fighting the drug scourge and to participating fully in all international efforts with each and every State.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mrs. Katalen Szomor Molnar, Executive Secretary of the Interministerial Drug Committee of Hungary.

Mrs. SZOMOR MOLNAR (Hungary): I am honoured to participate on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Hungary in these high-level meetings of the General Assembly dealing with the global problem of drug abuse and the ways and means to enhance the coherence of the system-wide activities in this field.

We are convinced that implementing a comprehensive multidisciplinary strategy at each level of society is the only way to guarantee success in the worldwide fight against drug abuse. Also, as has been stated in United Nations forums - first at the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987 in Vienna - and laid down in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, in various resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the General Assembly and, most importantly, in the Global Programme of Action, a well-balanced approach to drug demand and supply reduction has to be implemented on global, regional, national and local levels.

Because of the international and highly sophisticated nature of drug criminality, and also because of the global nature of the epidemic of drug misuse of our age - well-coordinated international control and preventive actions based on the policy prepared and approved by the competent United Nations bodies are called for to give guidance to Governments in implementing their national drug strategies and in carrying out a drug policy under the guidelines of the Global Programme of Action.

Hungary is party to the 1961 and 1971 United Nations drug Conventions and by the end of this year, following the adoption of the necessary legislative measures, we are going to ratify the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

The Hungarian Government established an Inter-ministerial Drug Committee in 1991, in which the representatives of 18 ministries and national agencies are taking decisions on our drug strategy and coordinating its implementation. The Committee is supported by working groups whose tasks are the drawing up of draft legislation and professional guidelines, strategic planning, evaluation of activities, and so on, in the areas of precursors, money-laundering, treatment as an alternative to prison, treatment in prison, national training plans, national prevention policies, epidemiology and drug-testing laboratories.

As a result of the war in former Yugoslavia, the main transit line of the Balkan drug trafficking route is now traversing Hungary and my country must cope with the increased problems arising there from illegal transit, increased illegal marketing, alarming trends of growing drug abuse and its interaction with the problems of social marginalization of larger groups, together with a shift in drug using habits from softer to harder drugs, including abuse of poppy.

As a country with a well-developed pharmaceutical and chemical industry, we are striving to prevent diversion of psychotropic substances and precursors into illegal channels. Our legislation on precursors, in effect since 1990, now covers all the 22 substances.

We are aware of the importance of preventing money laundering by legal means as well as by establishing a voluntary reporting system within financial institutions. The relevant legislation is to be taken up by the Parliament at the end of this year.

A newly emerging problem in our region is the advocacy of the so-called advantages of legalizing soft, and hard, drugs. Radical groups are trying to get the support of the mass media to achieve this objective. This problem would require a more active involvement by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in order to counter these negative tendencies.

The Government of Hungary has responded to these challenges by establishing the necessary institutional arrangements. The national police have established a crime and drug prevention network on national and county levels, and the public health service has national, county and city level medical officers who deal with the various aspects of the drug problem. We have 130 health education institutions disseminating information on the dangers of substance abuse.

Hungary has already taken innovative steps to establish a well-functioning system of multisectoral national and county level bodies entrusted with organizing prevention activities.

These steps show that we have done a lot, nationally, to prevent any aggravation of the drug abuse situation. At the same time, we should like to count on continuing guidance and support from UNDCP and from other multisectoral international organizations, such as, for example, the Pompidou Group.

We encourage UNDCP to continue its efforts to harmonize the various levels of international cooperation against drug abuse in order to allow for the maximum use of resources and eliminate overlap and duplication of efforts.

We fully support the demand reduction resolution from the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-sixth session inviting international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations to formulate strategies in the drug demand reduction field through defining target groups and developing special prevention programmes adapted to local social and cultural environments, to develop expertise through training and also to outline damage reduction programmes and programmes to prevent the spread of human immunodeficiency virus epidemics.

In the light of the global importance of demand reduction, UNDCP should further develop its research activities with a view to providing Governments with primary prevention programmes that have undergone scientific evaluation in UNDCP, thereby minimizing adverse effects.

Hungary, after 25 years of membership in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, is fully aware of the importance of well-balanced supply and demand reduction policies and the need for innovative approaches and adequate funding in the primary prevention field, and fully supports the leading and coordinating role of UNDCP in the world-wide action against drug abuse. We are ready to contribute our share to our common endeavours in this important area.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Devi Prasad Ojha, Member of Parliament of Nepal.

Mr. OJHA (Nepal): The menace of drug trafficking and abuse has emerged as a major challenge confronting mankind. The illicit use of and traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances have become a social plague afflicting both the developed and the developing countries. That humanity could be so deeply mired in the commerce of degradation and death is indeed a sobering thought.

As the criminal organizations running this trade have no respect for international frontiers, no State on its own is in a position to counter the problem. Concerted actions and cooperation at the international level are the only weapons against this scourge.

It is now commonly agreed that the one law the drug traffickers do not break is the law of supply and demand. So long as there is demand for substances and the money to pay for them, the traffickers will find a way of meeting that demand. The war against drugs will be won or lost on the ability of the international community to restrict the supply and at the same time reduce demand for narcotic drugs.

The global menace of drugs calls for a global response, and the United Nations offers the best forum for this kind of coordinated action. An effective international response would depend a great deal on close coordination and reliable funding of the multidisciplinary programme of action. What is required is more extensive cooperation between national law enforcement agencies in interdiction and narcotic intelligence.

There is also an urgent need to further strengthen incentives for the cultivation of substitute crops within the framework of a comprehensive rural development programme. Assurances of a steady market for substitute products are an essential step towards reducing the illicit production of raw materials. A global programme also cannot overlook the social and humanitarian aspects of the problem.

The adoption in 1990 by General Assembly at its seventeenth special session of the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action reflects the determination of the international community to coordinate its efforts in the fight against drugs. The declaration of the 1990s as the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse has given expression to the sense of urgency within a time-frame for action. This has led to an intensification of actions at the national and inter-State levels.

Although the problem of drugs has not reached epidemic proportions in Nepal, we have initiated a series of measures in keeping with the Global Programme of Action. At the apex is the coordination committee under the chairmanship of the Home Minister. A master plan has been formulated with the assistance of UNDCP.

Within our resource constraints, we have been giving increasing emphasis to treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of drug offenders and abusers. Increasing attention is being given to education and public information campaigns to generate awareness among the masses. We are trying to establish a nationwide network aimed at mobilizing basic community-level forces and the private sector in the fight against drugs. There is an active campaign to interdict trafficking in illicit drugs and to counter their production. To this end, the Government's enforcement department is being steadily strengthened.

At the regional level, we are active partners with other members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in pursuing drug-control activities.

SAARC has already carried out several major programmes involving policy makers, law enforcement agencies and professionals in the field of demand reduction. We now have in our region a SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which will help us coordinate our efforts in this area at the regional level.

Over the past four decades, the United Nations has taken important steps in the fight against drugs at the international level. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, its 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 constitute a comprehensive system of international control and a framework for cooperation against trafficking.

The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) is the single drug control programme, created by the General Assembly in 1990. Lack of adequate financial and human resources and administrative bottlenecks should not be allowed to hamper the mandate of that important Programme. The General Assembly has to ensure that the resources allocated to the Programme are commensurate with the heavy demands on it. In that context, I wish to refer to the valuable assistance provided by UNDCP in our national drug-control efforts. We also commend the quality of the workshops and expert-group meetings held under the auspices of the UNDCP within the framework of the Decade against Drug Abuse. My delegation urges greater efforts by the agencies of the United Nations system to incorporate and coordinate drug-related activities in their programmes, in keeping with the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control.

The war against drugs is one that mankind cannot lose. My delegation hopes that the review of the implementation of the Global Programme of Action at this session of the General Assembly will intensify international cooperation to end this nightmare.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on the Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, His Excellency Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun.

Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(interpretation from French)*: The convening of high-level plenary meetings to examine the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances is a clear reflection of how seriously the international community is approaching this important question. My delegation welcomes these plenary meetings, and hopes they will give new impetus to international cooperation in this sphere.

Despite vigorous efforts by countries at the local, regional, bilateral and multilateral levels, and despite certain encouraging developments, the overall world situation with respect to drug abuse and illicit trafficking continues to deteriorate. Unfortunately, there is no sign that this alarming situation will improve in the near future. In conformity with the Declaration and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, and with the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session - all of which remain fully valid - the international community is called upon to take the necessary measures and to do everything possible to eliminate the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. It is in the interest of countries throughout the world, producers and consumers alike, to work together in this difficult struggle, for without effective, sincere cooperation, we are all doomed to be the losers. And if we all lose the battle, the big winners will be the traffickers.

The fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking is a difficult and complex undertaking. We think it must be waged in strict conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, in particular those regarding respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the inadmissibility of the threat or use of force in international relations. These are sacrosanct principles jealously defended by our peoples; they must be observed when we promote international cooperation in this sphere.

Like many other countries, the Lao People's Democratic Republic knows the disastrous consequences of drug abuse. We all understand the scope of the problem and that we must do everything to fight this scourge. Proceeding from that premise, my country took the important decision to accede to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and has participated in international conferences, seminars and forums on the problem of drug abuse, all in the hope of making our modest contribution to the efforts of the international community to eradicate this problem. We note the complexity of the 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances; it involves a number of obligations requiring thorough analysis. Serious consideration of the Convention by the competent authorities is under way in my country.

In 1990 we established a national commission for control and monitoring of drugs under the chairmanship of a Vice-Minister. It is an independent body with the involvement of several relevant ministries; its permanent secretariat is at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Its main task is to coordinate all activities relating to drugs. It initiates programmes, plans new activities, follows up ongoing operations and collects data on production, traffic and abuse of drugs. The commission is still in its youth and needs international assistance in many areas if it is to be able to shoulder its weighty responsibilities.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is one of the South-East Asian opium-producing countries. One of our ethnic minorities, the Hmongs, has cultivated opium for generations. In order to reduce opium production the Lao Government currently has four integrated rural development projects under way. Three of these projects receive technical assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and financial contributions in the form of grants from Germany, Japan, Norway and Sweden. Just as important, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) contributes with loans on concessional terms. The fourth project is entirely financed by the United States of America. On behalf of the Lao Government and people I should like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks to UNDCP, IFAD and the Governments of those friendly countries for their important assistance.

The main objective of these development projects is to offer opium producers viable alternatives on the economic, social and ecological levels. We are pleased that the results are fairly encouraging so far. A large number of Hmong villagers have voluntarily abandoned the growing of opium. These development projects have given them hope in their efforts to raise their standard of living, and many of them feel that their way of life now is much better than it has been for several generations. The report (A/48/286) of the Secretary-General on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action, recognizes that opium production in Laos has fallen considerably. Similarly, the United States State Department said in a 1993 report:

(spoke in English)

> "Laos, the world's third largest opium-producing country, is the only one of the top three to reduce its potential opium production in each of the past three years (estimated production declined 13 percent in 1992 from 1991)".

(spoke in French)

In this fight against drug abuse the Lao Government also emphasises suppression. In 1992, 77 people in possession of cannabis, heroin and opium were arrested and prosecuted under the law. In 1993, the number was 99. We intend to continue our efforts resolutely so that we can make our modest contribution to international cooperation in this area. At the regional level the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to its cooperation with the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Thailand and Myanmar, with assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. The Memorandum of Understanding which we have just signed here in New York with our partners, the People's Republic of China, Thailand, Myanmar and the UNDCP, offers an important framework for effective cooperation in the future. With firm resolve and with multifaceted and sincere cooperation we hope to be able to attain our objectives.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Benin.

Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) *(interpretation from French)*: As the Secretary-General has emphasized in his message on the occasion of these two days of special debate, drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs have become a real scourge, which is constantly expanding.

The very large number of speakers on this subject shows the constant concern felt by the international community in the face of the disaster that drugs represent for our societies. The unanimous determination to fight such a disaster is a source of encouragement for our delegation.

In Africa the drug phenomenon, which has been steadily growing worse since the 1980s, constitutes an additional social problem for a number of countries already tormented by so many ills. Indeed, the African continent has become the very crossroads for illicit drug trafficking of all kinds because of the extremely limited material and financial resources available to our countries to fight this phenomenon.

The devastating consequences of drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in drugs are everywhere the same: increased crime, more violence, more juvenile delinquency and a worsening social situation in general. That is why the ongoing debate is particularly important to us.

Mrs. Hassan (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meetings devoted to the matter give the international community an opportunity to reaffirm the priority it attaches to the problem of controlling narcotic drugs.

At its seventeenth special session the General Assembly adopted on 23 February 1990 resolution S-17/2, containing a Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action in which it spells out its objectives and the measures to attain them. The General Assembly also proclaimed the period 1991-2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

In this connection Benin congratulates the Secretary-General on the major report he has submitted on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action, and gives its support to the recommendations in it.

It is important to note that, in pursuit of the goals of the Global Programme of Action, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) was established in 1990. It is only right to emphasize here the very positive contribution that that Programme has made at the national level as it seeks to help the developing countries in particular to build up their ability to fight drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

We are happy to note that progress has already been made, particularly in West Africa, Central Africa and East Africa, in consolidating the regional cooperation that is necessary so that collectively we can cope with the scourge of drugs in Africa.

To help developing countries meet their obligations, the United Nations must give more priority to technical cooperation in monitoring, preventing and reducing drug addiction so as to eliminate the still growing illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

We shall be able to put an end to drug abuse and the crime it causes only by prevention efforts based on information, education and action campaigns.

Member States should encourage the executive bodies of the specialized agencies of the United Nations to attach greater priority to their drug control activities. Such priority will have to be backed by allocations of additional resources to these bodies, particularly the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

At another level, the measures aimed at controlling narcotic drugs adopted by the international community cannot be successful unless all States parties abide scrupulously by the provisions of international treaties regulating the growing, producing, manufacturing, trading and use of narcotic drugs. That is why Benin, which has already ratified the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, is taking further steps to accede to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. These international Conventions represent basic legal instruments which each country must draw upon in drafting its own national legislation.

In conclusion, I repeat that the delegation of Benin is deeply convinced that only the adoption of effective and sustained measures at the national, regional and international levels to promote the implementation of the Global Programme of Action will allow us to win the fight against drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in drugs. We hope to see our deliberations result in a strengthening of the international community's determination to wage a fierce struggle against one of the most disastrous scourges humanity has ever faced.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. MAKKAWI (Lebanon) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Drug abuse is a grave scourge that afflicts all human societies. It has had serious adverse effects on the social and economic life of large groups of people. Combating that scourge has required and continues to require concerted action by all nations and by international organizations. The United Nations has played a crucial role in the development of a global strategy against this growing menace.

Recognizing the magnitude of this threat and assuming its responsibilities towards the world community, Lebanon has spared no effort, even during the darkest days of the bloody years of the strife that devastated its territory, in trying to curb the cultivation of narcotic plants and the processing of and trafficking in illicit drugs. To this end, as this Assembly is aware, our national efforts have persisted despite our extremely limited resources, the decline of the rule of law and the weakness of governmental organs due to the general conditions that prevailed in the country. Furthermore, Lebanon has continued to be an active member of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and has maintained close and effective cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) even throughout that period.

Lebanon's geographical location - at the crossroads between the East and the West, between the centres of illicit drug-production and drug-consumption markets - has made it, on the one hand, a transit route for opium and hashish supplies exported to Europe and, on the other, a trade route for cocaine shipments originating in Latin America. In addition, the extremely difficult living conditions of Lebanese farmers and the disruption of licit crop production and export activity for an extended period of time during the civil war, inclined some toward the cultivation of narcotic-drug plants. The lure of ready markets was too strong to resist especially in view of the virtual absence of central government authority and the weakness of local government law-enforcement agencies.

The difficult internal security situation afforded drug traffickers good opportunities for increasing their production. Thus, the land area used for cultivation of illicit narcotic plants was expanded to 16,000 hectares in 1987. In addition, manufacturing facilities were built, trafficking networks were organized and expanded and illegal seaports were developed and operated for illicit purposes.

Against this backdrop the Lebanese Government, following the re-establishment of its authority through the Taif national reconciliation pact, made it one of its top priorities to launch a firm and relentless drive against all aspects of illicit drug activity: cultivation, production, distribution and trafficking.

Over the past three years, all fields of narcotic-drug plants in the Beka'a Valley have been eradicated. In fact, the last two hectares of such plants, grown in rugged terrain, were destroyed this year. The fact that Lebanon is now totally free of such plantings is cause for celebration and a source of pride. I repeat: Lebanon today is totally free of such plantings. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Lebanese Internal Security Forces, the army and the customs service, sizeable amounts of narcotic drugs have been seized and large numbers of traffickers have been arrested. The following figures are quite illustrative: in 1990 588 kilograms of hashish were seized, along with 33 kilograms of heroin and 17 kilograms of cocaine. In addition, 372 traffickers were arrested. In 1993, on the other hand, up to 30 September, some 13,700 kilograms of hashish had been seized, along with 45 kilograms of heroin and 263 kilograms of cocaine, while 858 traffickers had been arrested.

The Drug Control Division of the Judiciary Police has been reinforced with officers and equipment, and four new branch offices have been added in major cities, despite our scarce resources. Also, all illegal seaports that were used for drug smuggling have been destroyed.

The Lebanese drug-control and law-enforcement agencies have maintained extensive and close cooperation with their counterparts in Europe and the United States. The wide scope of cooperation, which included 30 operations of controlled delivery under surveillance has yielded remarkable results. Several international smugglers and traffickers have been arrested and their clandestine operational networks dismantled. Considerable amounts of narcotic drugs have also been seized.

The Lebanese Government pursues a very stringent policy towards those who farm and traffic in drug plants. To a large extent, it has succeeded in eliminating the domestic distribution networks which constitute, as in other countries, the most formidable of the global strata of production, shipment and consumption of illicit drugs. At the same time, the Lebanese Government is in the process of enacting new legislation to stiffen punishment of those convicted of drug-related crimes. A High Inter-Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, has been set up to develop and define the general policy parameters of combating drugs.

The international missions which recently visited Lebanon have expressed satisfaction over the efforts made by the Lebanese Government to combat illicit drugs and the effectiveness of the measures it has taken in this regard. The international observers have also verified that, as a result of the Government's policy of eliminating illicit plantings,

> "some 500,000 Lebanese civilians living in 240 villages in the north-eastern Beka'a region, who up to that point had relied on opium and hashish for their livelihoods, are now forced to seek new and alternative means of earning a living."

Lebanon has emerged from its long, painful plight with a devastated infrastructure and severely disrupted basic civil services. The Lebanese administration is seriously hampered by enormous shortages in its operational resources, with negative implications for the operational functions of the police and security apparatus, including the drug-control machinery. In sharp contrast, drug traffickers and smugglers have access to state-of-the-art technology, which they exploit in expanding their illicit activities and transactions.

Lebanon has duly sought to discharge its obligations in the area of combating the illicit cultivation, manufacture and trafficking of narcotic drugs. Therefore, it expects to receive from the Governments of friendly countries, especially those whose societies suffer from widespread drug-related problems, material and technical assistance towards the development of a substitute economy in the Lebanese areas which, for many years, have depended on narcotic drugs as a major economic and financial source of revenue. The Lebanese Government is in need of external aid for its development projects in remote areas and for the creation of substitute crops that would ensure adequate and licit livelihoods for the farmers, with a view to discouraging them from engaging in illicit cultivation. We also hope that the United Nations and its specialized agencies will make effective contributions towards that goal.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Mr. Giacomelli, for the interest he has shown in the needs of Lebanon. In this context, may I draw attention to the fact that Lebanon's share of the United Nations offerings in this area has been limited to a single multifaceted programme whose value did not exceed $1,129,000. We sincerely hope that future assistance to Lebanon will be commensurate with its actual and urgent needs.

The concepts of global interdependence and solidarity should unite us in our common struggle against this scourge, wherever it appears and in all its aspects. However, we feel that confronting this problem in its first stage, namely the stage of cultivation of narcotic plants, is perhaps the most cost-effective method. A "nip it in the bud" approach would be most appropriate in dealing with this scourge.

Furthermore, Lebanon is in need of assistance to establish clinical facilities and counselling programmes to treat and rehabilitate the victims of this serious social problem. In this context, Lebanon is now seeking to establish, with the cooperation of the Arab Ministers of the Interior, a pan-Arab rehabilitation centre in Lebanon to treat drug addicts from Arab and Middle Eastern countries.

Lebanon, which has traditionally played a leading role in the cultural and economic life of the entire region, continues to have the potential and fervent desire to maintain its creative and pioneering role in its immediate region and in the world at large. However, under the present circumstances, Lebanon is in need of support and assistance from friendly Governments and international organizations in order to help the Government enhance its effectiveness and carry out reconstruction and development programmes throughout the country. Our current economic and social plans focus on the development of our human resources and the revitalization of our national institutions.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on The Honourable Phandu Skelemani, Attorney-General of Botswana.

Mr. SKELEMANI (Botswana): By now, we all know that the problem of the illicit production, sale, demand and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances has been with us for a very, very long time. The nations of the world have individually, regionally and internationally tried to grapple with this problem, with varying degrees of success. There is no doubt in my mind that, in order to achieve any reasonable measure of success in the war against drug abuse and drug trafficking, greater practical international cooperation is necessary.

I am sure that by now we have all realized that, although it is necessary to bring the nations of the world together every now and then and to sign treaties, meaningful progress can be achieved only when individual States do all within their power to help each other.

The causes of illicit drug trafficking are many and varied. Poverty, greed and decadence are, in my view, some of the primary causes. It therefore appears to me that we should pay greater attention to the identification of the causes of illicit drug trafficking, because it is only when we clearly understand why our people engage in illicit drug trafficking that we can come up with solutions likely to have an impact. If there is no crop substitution for a peasant who grows as a lucrative cash crop plants from which drugs are made, what hope is there of dissuading that peasant from growing such plants?

I am aware that resolution 47/99 of 16 December 1992 calls for introspection. I also believe that the actions we take in the fight against illicit drug trafficking will invariably reflect our perception of what the root causes of the problem are. Consequently, Botswana, although it has not yet acceded to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, has taken what we consider to be the primary practical steps necessary for the implementation of that Convention, among others.

In 1990, Botswana enacted the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act. As that Act states, its object is to facilitate the provision, and obtaining by Botswana, of international assistance in criminal matters. Under this Act, we are able to help other countries to obtain evidence, identify witnesses and suspects in Botswana. We can execute requests for search and seizure and confiscation of property in respect of offences. Thus we have enabled ourselves to make the necessary applications to our courts on behalf of other States or authorities. The State also has the power to send to other States persons required as witnesses, even if such persons are prisoners, as long as the usual safeguards are given by the other State.

We have also enacted the Proceeds of Serious Crime Act 1990, which also allows the State where a person has been convicted of a serious crime to apply to court for a confiscation order in respect of proceeds of that crime. A serious crime is an offence punishable by not less than two years' imprisonment. This definition does not apply in the case of the enforcement of a foreign confiscation order, which, I might add, will be enforced whatever the minimum punishment in the other country. This Act also allows us to apply for a restraining order - *ex parte* - to ensure that the probable proceeds of serious crime are not dissipated before a trial is concluded.

The aim of those pieces of legislation is to ensure that drug traffickers, among others, do not benefit from their criminal activities. They should know that their ill-gotten gains will not be safe in Botswana, as the legal framework now exists which allows for such gains to be followed and confiscated.

Although Botswana is not a producer of any of the illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, save a small amount of marijuana - or *dagga* - we have nevertheless deemed it necessary to punish severely those who traffic in those substances. Even though as a lawyer one does not want the executive to dictate to the courts what punishment to give in any given case, we have had to provide for minimum sentences of 10 years' imprisonment for traffickers. This minimum sentence has obviously had some effect, as the number of persons caught with illicit drugs has dropped significantly.

I should also mention our 1990 Extradition Act. Such laws, we believe, are important in any international fight against drug traffickers. On the basis of reciprocity, we are willing to extradite even our nationals for trial or sentencing outside our jurisdiction. There are very few exceptions to extradition - and these are universally accepted - such as that the offence is punishable by death in the other country whereas it is not so punishable in Botswana. But the accused may still be extradited if agreement is reached that the death penalty will not be imposed.

Let me turn finally to those areas where it is not within our power to legislate or easily find an effective solution. A few of our nationals have as a result of either poverty or greed - or both - become involved in illicit trafficking in habit-forming drugs. We have tried and continue to try to accelerate rural development. We have received help from many of our friends through bilateral arrangements and, indeed, from the United Nations. A lot remains to be done and a lot can be achieved only through international cooperation.

Practical cooperation between investigating and prosecuting agencies can be improved. We have to realize that it is not much use catching only the small fish: it is the drug barons we must aim for. We need stricter legislation on both corruption and money-laundering. Banks should not simply accept unexplained huge deposits. Greater access to banking records should be possible. Indeed, people ought to be required to explain life styles beyond their known legitimate means. I am pleased to say that we in Botswana are busy preparing legislation to deal with this kind of corruption.

The success of small jurisdictions like ours will depend to a very large extent on the help we can get from the international community. Our law enforcement agencies need greater training. For example, we need police accountants to go through the accounts of suspects. We need help also to mount educational programmes against the evils of drug abuse and the corruption associated therewith. We are clearly very far from producing drug-free societies, and we probably will never be able to achieve a 100 per cent cleansing. Yet we must continue to fight with greater vigour, especially in the face of the sophisticated methods used by drug traffickers the world over.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I call next on the Director-General and Chief Executive of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency and Assistant Inspector-General of Police of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr. Bappah Jama'are Muhammad.

Mr. MUHAMMAD (Nigeria): My delegation is pleased to be participating in these high-level meetings to review the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances, especially since the adoption of a Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, held in February 1990.

The escalation of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continues to endanger the health of individuals and to threaten the very fabric of society, particularly with respect to national security, economic stability and social welfare. The Political Declaration's proclamation of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, 1991-2000, was a recognition of the need for effective national, regional and international action to promote the Global Programme of Action.

My delegation has risen to the challenge, particularly at the national and regional levels. Our National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has been strengthened and reorganized. In that connection, six operational zones have been created; interdiction and investigation activities are coordinated from these zones. Each zone has the mandate to monitor closely the international airports, sea ports and land borders. The Agency has also established a Narcotics Communications Initiative Committee charged with the close study of the modes of operation of drug traffickers. In addition, it is hoped that its training school in Jos, Plateau state, will be upgraded by the United Nations

International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to a regional training centre to service anglophone West African countries.

Nigeria was one of the first Member States to ratify the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. It has also entered into bilateral agreements with many countries in the areas of drug trafficking and abuse, and has prescribed stiff penalties against drug offenders. In view of my country's acknowledgement of the role of controlled delivery systems, which make for greater harmony and mutual trust between countries, Nigeria has successfully put into practice a controlled delivery system with the British Government.

My delegation acknowledges the role of the UNDCP, the International Narcotics Control Board and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in the fight against the drug scourge. The UNDCP, in particular, has played a major role in this regard since its establishment. Through its organization of seminars and workshops, and particularly through its support for the activities of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), the UNDCP has been playing a major role in the efforts of the international community to eradicate the drug menace. However, the UNDCP needs the resources to implement its laudable policies and programmes. We therefore hope that the international community will continue to extend much needed resources to the UNDCP.

There is also a need to complement the efforts of economically disadvantaged States by providing them with the necessary resources. In this respect we reiterate the need to give serious consideration to the sharing of proceeds confiscated from convicted drug traffickers with the States where they are domiciled. This is especially necessary where such States have materially assisted in investigations by providing a direct, timely and unimpeded flow of information leading to the arrest of the traffickers and the confiscation of the proceeds of their crime. The availability of such resources will certainly complement the efforts of the relevant drug-enforcement agencies by making them more proactive in combating the drug menace. We also call for an upward review of the present sum of $3.3 million allocated to more than 50 States in Africa for technical cooperation in drug matters, out of the total appropriation of $57.7 million.

It is the view of my delegation that to facilitate the monitoring and rapid interception of drug traffickers operational information should be readily exchanged at the appropriate levels. To achieve this, we call for the establishment and maintenance of focal points for the exchange of such information by Member States.

My delegation supports draft resolution A/48/L.12, which provides that the services of experts could be engaged by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in its policy-making role, where necessary. We believe that such an arrangement would allow for the injection of new and viable ideas into the operations of both the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the UNDCP. Because of the importance we attach to them, we also agree with the suggestion in the draft resolution that such issues be further discussed by the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council next year.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate its conviction that international cooperation is the main requirement for effectively combating the drug nightmare. The fight against drug trafficking and drug abuse also requires constant imaginative ideas to match the sophistication of drug traffickers. I am convinced that, given the constant threat of this deadly scourge, we can no longer rely on mere ineffective clichés, but must take positive action.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* The next speaker is Major-General Salahuddin Tirmizi, Director-General of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force of Pakistan, upon whom I now call.

Mr. TIRMIZI (Pakistan): It is my honour and privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of my country on this important agenda item dealing with the control of narcotic drugs.

I should like to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for his important statement on international drug control. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports under this item and for his statement, which was read out by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

My delegation is deeply alarmed by the magnitude of the escalating trends in drug abuse, the illicit trafficking, demand, production, supply and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Those activities pose a grave and persistent threat to the health and well-being of nations and a challenge to the political, economic, social and cultural structures of all societies. They affect the lives and dignity of millions of human beings, most especially young people. The proliferation of narcotic drugs not only accounts for an upsurge in crime, violence and corruption, but is a constant drain on human, financial, intellectual and other resources, thus impairing the capacity of countries in their efforts to achieve social and economic development.

The extraordinarily high level of illicit consumption, trafficking and production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances necessitates a comprehensive approach to international cooperation in drug-abuse control and counter-offensives at the international, regional and national levels. The universal concern and determination to take effective, coherent and concerted efforts against the drug problem culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in 1990 of the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action. Since its creation in 1991 the UNDCP has been doing an admirable job to coordinate all United Nations drug-control activities and to implement the Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session.

No strategy to control this scourge can succeed without addressing all aspects of the problem in all its manifestations. Production and supply of illicit narcotic drugs are inextricably linked to demand. Until recently the international efforts to curb the menace were rather lopsided, concentrating mainly on supply reduction. My delegation is happy to note that due recognition is now being given to the importance of reducing demand. In his message on the occasion of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking earlier this year, the Secretary-General stated that:

> "While there must be no lessening of efforts in the other areas of drug control, the emphasis must now shift to demand reduction."

We also share the view that demand reduction should be part of a comprehensive and balanced approach to the long-term goal of eliminating drug abuse.

The Government of Pakistan attaches high priority to the eradication of the drug menace from the country. Our efforts are aimed at various aspects of the problem, particularly supply-reduction programmes and curbs on illicit drug trafficking. Those initiatives include programmes for the eradication of the production of narcotic substances, the elimination of processing and trafficking, the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts and community intervention on drug abuse.

A number of important administrative and legislative measures have been taken in the recent past to control the problem. These include the establishment of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force, which, like the existing agencies directly involved in drug control, investigates cases of drug trafficking and prosecutes the criminal under the law. The Anti-Narcotics Task Force Ordinance empowers the Force to search, investigate and arrest those involved in the drug trade. In order to deal quickly with crimes related to drugs, such cases are being referred to special courts for speedy trials.

In December 1991, the Government of Pakistan promulgated an Ordinance amending the relevant law to provide for the destruction of seized narcotics. As a result, huge quantities of seized narcotics have since been destroyed. In September this year, the Dangerous Drug Act of 1930 was amended to the effect that courts may order forfeiture of the assets of a person sentenced to imprisonment for a term of two years or more. The previous law provided for such a forfeiture if an accused was sentenced to life imprisonment. Also in September, relevant provisions of law have been amended to include the death penalty in case of certain serious offences relating to drug trafficking. Also, through a Presidential Ordinance, legal lacunae regarding the definition of opium have been removed from the relevant laws.

Pakistan has made significant progress in curbing the production of narcotics. Since the crop season of 1978-79, the acreage under poppy cultivation has been reduced from 80,500 acres to about 15,000 acres in 1992-93. The production of opium has been reduced from 800 tons in 1978-79 to about 150 tons in 1992-93. This has been possible through the implementation of a variety of crop-substitution and area-development schemes and the provision of economic incentives and alternate means of income to the traditional poppy growers. The Government has also undertaken infrastructural development projects by building new roads, schools and irrigation channels to ensure socio-economic development in such areas.

As a result of intensified interdiction measures, the law enforcement agencies seized 3,378 kilograms of opium, 3,129 kilograms of heroin and over 160,000 kilograms of hashish during the first 8 months of this year. Our law enforcement agencies are also maintaining a close liaison with their counterparts in other countries as well as with INTERPOL in order to exchange information about drug traffickers and to take legal action against them.

Together with preventive measures through effective and rigorous law enforcement, education provides the possibility of keeping people away from drugs. In Pakistan, a programme is under implementation to educate the masses and the target groups about the ill effects of drug abuse. Attention is also being given to training persons in the field of prevention throughout the country so that they in turn will train community workers.

Governments and intergovernmental organizations alone cannot resolve this problem. Therefore, every effort is being made to utilize available resources at the local level among families, teachers, social workers, religious leaders and health-care workers and to mobilize non-governmental organizations to combat this scourge.

In the regional context, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is pursuing drug control activities through a technical committee on the prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse. Between 1988 and 1992, this committee carried out 20 major subregional programmes involving key policymakers and other professionals in the field of law enforcement and demand reduction. Pakistan is a party to the SAARC Convention on narcotic drugs. Similarly, the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization has also established anti-narcotics committees, thus providing another important regional framework for cooperation in combating drug trafficking.

The Global Programme of Action focuses on several areas of cooperation in the multilateral context. These include the increased involvement of specialized agencies, other United Nations bodies and international financial institutions in prevention activities and alternative-development and crop-substitution programmes. Significantly, the International Monetary Fund has singled out the drug problem as one of five global priorities. In developing countries, drug trafficking is linked to poverty. The programmes of international financial institutions relating to poverty eradication therefore have great bearing on eliminating the drug menace. It is important that international financial institutions provide generous assistance to developing countries, especially those that have launched a crusade against illicit drugs.

My delegation also accords high priority to the need for allocating the necessary financial, personnel and other resources for drug control activities within the United Nations system. It is therefore essential to provide a greater amount of resources to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme both through the regular budget and through voluntary extrabudgetary contributions in order to enable it to respond effectively to the needs and requirements of developing countries in combating the drug problem.

In the context of economic assistance, we believe that priority should be given to farmers in the poppy-growing areas and that industrial units should be established to generate alternative income sources and employment opportunities. The cultivators of substitute crops must also get better access for their products in the international markets. Here, international cooperation assumes fundamental importance. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies involved in drug control programmes in developing countries are in need of modern equipment to enhance their professional skills and effectiveness. The developed countries can play an important role in the provision of such equipment, meeting high operational costs and training the personnel of the enforcement agencies.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the scourge of drug abuse can only be tackled by effective international cooperation. A clear strategy is in place in the resolutions and decisions of the seventeenth special session. Let us renew our resolve to make the Global Programme of Action a success by concerted action on the international, regional and national levels. For its part, Pakistan remains resolutely committed to taking all possible actions to eliminate and eradicate the narcotics problems. In this context, it is pertinent to bring to the notice of the Assembly that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, in her first cabinet meeting held yesterday, identified the eradication of the narcotic drug problem as one of the six priority areas of her Government.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I call on Mr. Jean-Marie Kacon Gervais, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire) *(interpretation from French):* Over the past two decades and especially since 1980, the abuse and illicit trafficking of drugs have grown at a frightening pace, sparing no national borders and without regard to the socio-economic development of countries around the globe. Hence, this phenomenon has not bypassed Africa any more than it has bypassed any other continent.

Already weakened by an unprecedented economic crisis, and without having been forearmed, our countries have found themselves in the grip of a complex criminal and drug problem with all the social consequences it entails. We had to start from scratch in learning about this new threat, which is bound to the no-less delicate question of underdevelopment.

We had to learn very quickly that eliminating this global scourge required steadfast political will and fortitude in mobilizing major human and material resources on the national, regional and international levels. With that awareness, most African Governments have shown their political will by acceding to international legal instruments relating to the fight against drug abuse and illegal trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances. They have likewise made praiseworthy endeavours to try to stop the growth in, or even diminish trafficking in and consumption of, drugs. Despite their modest means, they continue today to confront the threat.

Yet all these efforts seem not to have borne fruit. The dimensions and complexity of the phenomenon exceed all predictions, and the rudimentary means available to our States are far from being able to respond to a global problem. Though not the main victim, Africa today seems to have become integrated into this vast illegal enterprise as a fulcrum of activity.

How did this come about? Why this explosion of drug trafficking and narcotics use in our countries? The causes are many, but relate principally to Africa's current socio-economic situation, which is illustrated by several factors.

The first is poverty. The continuing impoverishment of Africans is a major factor in the increased trafficking in and production and abuse of drugs.

Secondly, the low prices of our export products make our peasants turn, under the influence of traffickers, to clandestine cultivation of cannabis or to other kinds of unorthodox agricultural enterprises; the profits may be illegal, but they are far greater than those generated by traditional crops. It is true that we have not yet reached that point, but persistent low export prices and the ongoing impoverishment of the rural masses make us fear that we shall.

Thirdly, the economic crisis, with its attendant marginalization, layoffs, unemployment and school-leaving, encourages drug abuse, previously unknown in sub-Saharan Africa but now on its way to becoming a way for people to forget their harsh living conditions.

Fourthly, civil war, famine, natural disaster and drought with their attendant poverty, violence, corruption and community destabilization also encourage the spread of drugs in our countries, at least in terms of their production and sale as substitute resources.

Fifthly, our borders are porous, owing to insufficient trained customs and police personnel and to a lack of funding for surveillance and control. Before we knew it, Africa gradually was becoming a favourite site for traffickers: a transit area without major risks for contraband from many sources. Statistics show that the quantity of hard drugs seized in Africa in 1991 was six times that reported in 1990. This is exponential growth. How can we fail to be aghast?

Obviously, Africa alone cannot allocate the considerable resources needed for an effective fight against a phenomenon of these dimensions. International cooperation is indispensable if we are to dismantle the networks in our capitals, which have become drug-transit strongholds.

In that connection, I cannot fail to pay a well-deserved tribute to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), whose sustained assistance to our Governments is helping us strengthen our machinery in the fight against drugs. There is no need here to speak of UNDCP's crucial role in its sphere of activity. Faced with the complexity and seriousness of drug-related questions, it coordinates activities to avoid wasted effort and useless outlays. It redounds to the Secretary-General's honour that he conceived of coordinating anti-drug activities through a more rational allocation of responsibilities.

We are pleased that the UNDCP regional office organized a seminar, held from 15 to 19 March 1993 at Abidjan, for foreign-affairs officials of States members of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States, to inform and train them on the drug problem. The participants, from 27 countries members of those subregional economic-integration organizations, recommended measures aimed at: ratification by all States of the Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 and harmonization of their national legislation to strengthen the anti-drug struggle; further building of subregional and regional cooperation through the establishment of a subregional and regional anti-drug structure; further intensification of international cooperation; provision of basic and advanced training for officials responsible for the prevention, repression, treatment and social reintegration of addicts; bolstering of measures against laundering drug money; and recognition of the need to increase assistance to Africa, the most vulnerable of the continents. They also recommended UNDCP assistance in the areas of prevention, repression and social reintegration. Those recommendations were ratified at the Cairo summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which declared the anti-drug struggle to be a high priority for African States.

Turning to my own country, Côte d'Ivoire, I need hardly remind members that we were the first in Africa to establish a ministry for the anti-drug struggle; this reflected our keen awareness of the dangers of the drug phenomenon. Had it not been for the deep economic crisis we are facing, that department would have continued to exist and to coordinate our efforts in the fight against the production, sale and use of narcotics. None the less, my Government remains convinced of the soundness of current programmes, which are coordinated by an interministerial committee for the anti-drug struggle.

But alas, faced with the size of the job, our needs are immense and our available means are modest indeed. In order to eradicate this phenomenon, we will require the means to inform and sensitize our peoples on the real danger of drugs. In order to put an end to the production of drugs, other sources of income must be found or our traditional cash crops must be made profitable enough to discourage unlawful agricultural speculations involving drugs and psychotropic products.

In an excellent report produced by the United Nations Secretariat, mention is made, in substance, of the fact that drug-produced revenues are at the very heart of the economies in crisis. It must thus be feared that our rural populations, discouraged by excessively low prices for production and export, will only exacerbate this danger. Any positive result in the fight against drugs must depend on our economic growth. Only by promoting development will it be possible to put an end to this phenomenon, spawned by poverty and the impoverishment of rural and urban masses.

From this perspective, the eradication of poverty would appear to be one of the first measures to be taken. At the same time, the international community should agree to mobilize substantial funding to enable the UNDCP to dispose of the means without which the Programme cannot hope to attain its objectives.

Moreover, the frozen assets of drug traffickers should serve to strengthen cooperation, not only on the bilateral level between consumer and producer countries, as has been the case until now, but also among transit countries such as our own. It is from the need to eliminate this scourge that the notion of shared responsibility invoked by General Assembly resolution 47/102 takes its full meaning.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now recognize Colonel Saleh Mohammed Al-Sheikh, Assistant Under-Secretary of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior in charge of humanitarian affairs.

Mr. AL-SHEIKH (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The narcotic trade is expanding on an international scale. Therefore the competent agencies engaged in combating drugs are intent upon alerting the world to the threat posed by the unprecedented spread of that trade. The prices of certain drugs, such as heroin, have actually dropped in some regions due to availability and excess supply, yet the profits realized are abundant and vary from place to place, on the long road from the producing countries to the distribution and consumption areas.

Drugs are smuggled by the most effective methods of camouflage, sometimes by resorting to bribery and the temptation of material gain and, if the need arises, by force and coercion. Consequently, it has become much more difficult to combat the international drug trade in general, especially now, in view of the increasing tendency of traffickers to launder their ill-gotten gains through the collusion of networks of middlemen. Some countries and financial centres are now known to be places where money laundering operations are carried out without difficulty or hindrance. The task of drug combating agencies, therefore, has become much more difficult and complex. Drug trafficking is no longer the trade of small-time pushers; it has become big business and the preserve of huge international and regional cartels which use the most modern methods of smuggling, distribution and money laundering. Some studies indicate that the financial returns of the drug trade have outstripped by far the revenues of the petroleum trade in its entirety.

It is no wonder then that the drug problem has become the source of serious concern for the international community as a whole because of its dangerous effects and the medical, security and economic problems it causes. It is a scourge that threatens the very existence of humanity and could lead to the disintegration of the family and the disruption of any country's social fabric. We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consider the danger posed by drugs to be more lethal than the most destructive weapons of modern warfare.

The Kingdom, having witnessed the vast and dangerous spread of drugs in many countries, did not wait for this lethal scourge to attack it. Saudi Arabia has taken all possible steps and precautions to prevent an internal drug problem from arising. The Kingdom continues to deploy all possible efforts at every local, regional and international level. It has signed international agreements to fight the spread of narcotics and psychotropic substances; it has enacted legislation to combat the smugglers and pushers of these poisons; and it has encouraged bilateral agreements and signed quite a number of them.

Drug combating efforts will not succeed except through total and close cooperation and coordination between all the agencies and authorities involved in drug combating activities in every country. Such cooperative efforts have successfully forestalled many attempts to smuggle drugs. The war against drugs and the criminal organizations which traffic in them will not be effective without joint action by all concerned parties. That is why the Arab countries, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have agreed on concerted strategies to ensure cooperation in the war against drugs by sharing information in order to forestall attempts to smuggle drugs into any Arab territory.

The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances calls on the parties to the Convention to enact laws in conformity with its provisions. The Convention represents the most effective means of combating the drug trade through the revitalization of international cooperation and mutual assistance, and by seeking the means of preventing drug smugglers from reaping the benefits of their illicit activities. It encourages the enactment of legislation to criminalize money laundering, and aims at preventing international borders from becoming barriers that hinder efforts to bring offenders to justice, since drug trafficking recognizes no boundaries.

In response to the Convention, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has entered, through its competent authorities, into agreements for the extradition of criminals and the exchange of legal assistance, criminalized money laundering operations, and prepared a new anti-drug law, now in the final stages of formulation, which conforms to the 1988 Convention. The Government of Saudi Arabia will thus be enacting the most modern laws in the fight against the drug trade.

The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia wishes to remind the distinguished delegates that in addition to the aforementioned steps taken to prevent the spread of drugs, we must concentrate on the local priorities such as informing the public on the moral, medical, social and economic dangers of drug abuse; enacting stringent laws against drug traffickers; making treatment available to the victims of the drug trade; and setting up effective anti-drug agencies equipped with the latest technologies.

I wish to reaffirm that Saudi Arabia resolutely supports every international effort to combat the drug trade through cooperation and constructive dialogue founded on a deep respect for the experiences of States and peoples and their particular cultural heritage.

Saudi Arabia's interest in supporting the United Nations programmes and the international cooperation mechanism does not stem from the scope of this scourge in the Kingdom, but rather from a sense of international responsibility, on the one hand, and from our conviction, on the other, that drug trafficking does not recognize international borders. Our reading of the direction the drug trade is taking, on the international level, in the 1990s gives us cause for concern because of its expanding scope and the increasing sophistication of its methods. Such a situation presents the international community with major challenges at a time when it is striving to promote ethical behaviour and to fight drug pushers by every possible means.

Our Government views with satisfaction the international efforts now being deployed with a view to strengthening cooperation in the area of security at the regional and international levels. Saudi Arabia particularly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to create the appropriate climate for strengthening international efforts in the area of combating drugs.

I should like to emphasize the need to formulate a comprehensive strategy that would combine theory and practice as well as prevention and enforcement. To achieve such an objective, we have to cooperate as States, agencies and organizations toward the creation of a world community that would be able to live in security, safety and prosperity.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on His Excellency Mohammed Taryam, the Director General of Security Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. TARYAM (United Arab Emirates) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I should like to pay tribute to the tireless efforts and the constructive contributions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. I would like to reaffirm our commitment to carrying out the functions and tasks contained in the Global Programme of Action on international cooperation against drugs, in the context of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

The problem of drugs is undoubtedly one of the most important and pressing issues that affect the security and the very future of mankind, given its grave consequences. In addition to its local aspect, it is a global problem, because it impacts the economic, social, political and security conditions of most countries of the world. We are convinced that this problem cannot be effectively addressed at the local level alone or by local thinking alone. The problem of drug abuse is not confined within the national borders of any one country, but transcends those borders and impacts other countries. Herein lies the global aspect of the problem. We cannot claim or delude ourselves that there is one single country on this planet that could consider itself to be immune to the pernicious evils of drugs that endanger mankind as a whole and whose gravity is exacerbated from one year to the next.

The development of new kinds of drugs and the continued efforts by drug traffickers to promote these new drugs throughout the world despite international efforts to combat their endeavours have combined in making the problem more complex and intractable.

Mankind has made enormous progress since the conclusion of the first Convention on drugs in Shanghai in 1908. Since then many international conventions and protocols have been concluded in an attempt to realize the aspirations of the world community after a formula whereby the problems of supply, demand and trafficking of illicit drugs may be brought under control. So far we have 15 such conventions and protocols. Most important are the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. All of these instruments represent resolute international efforts over a long period of time to rationalize world action and strategy at the national, regional and international levels against the illicit use of drugs.

The United Arab Emirates has developed a local strategy based on the global strategies developed by international and regional organizations and on the Arab strategy developed by the Pan-Arab Bureau for Drug Control. In deference to the international conventions in this regard to which my country is a party, we try to harmonize our local conditions accordingly. Competent authorities in the United Arab Emirates try to harmonize our national legislation on combating drugs with the provisions of those conventions. We are also drafting a law on the laundering of proceeds from crime with particular emphasis on drug-related crimes.

Our strategy focuses on the reduction of demand and the prevention of drug use by developing an approach that takes into account the need for increasing awareness, treatment, rehabilitation side by side with law enforcement measures. This is supervised and followed up by a higher national committee against drugs whose efforts are directed towards prevention of the entry of these toxic substances into our country. Regional and international cooperation and exchange of information are essential in this respect.

In promotion of international action, we continue to work with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the Economic and Social Council, and the narcotics branch and other international organizations and organs. The diffusion and exchange of information as well as participation in seminars and training programmes offered by these organs are of vital importance.

The United Arab Emirates hosted on 3 October 1992 the World Conference of Experts in Drug Control. Thirty-one States and nine international organizations participated in that Conference which, at the conclusion of its work, made comprehensive and important recommendations calling for consolidation of all efforts by States and for cooperation by international organizations in confronting this menace which endangers all mankind by exchanging information and expertise and by organizing local, regional and international meetings. While there is good faith in promoting international cooperation to confront these problems, we call for an expansion of this cooperation on the basis of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. This Convention provides a good legal basis for such cooperation. In this context, we urge those countries that have not acceded to and/or ratified that Convention to do so without delay. We also call for training programmes under the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to be stepped up in both quantity and quality, especially with regard to the training of police and customs agents who are in charge of law enforcement in combating drugs. Beneficiary countries should contribute their own inputs and their assessment to such programmes so that they may continue to be improved.

With regard to the question of paying compensation to farmers in the producing countries and the development of substitute crops, my country supports the recommendations of international conferences on combating drugs.

We feel that the United Nations, with its specialized agencies, is the world body most qualified to implement those recommendations and translate them into realities in order to promote international cooperation in the area of substitutive rural development, and put an end to the dangers to the environment that arise from illicit cultivation. In order to avoid economic and social dislocation in the producing countries, the international community should provide technical, economic and financial assistance to those countries with a view to promoting substitutive development, while combating trafficking across the transit countries and diminishing the capability to satisfy the demand for drugs in the consuming countries. My delegation also calls for stringent measures in the area of monitoring the returns of drug trafficking and for the international criminalization of the practice of money laundering.

Combating the abuse of and trafficking in drugs is part and parcel of the need to comprehensively address the economic and social problems that beset the countries of the world in a manner that would enable those countries to achieve sustainable development and political stability. It is self-evident that the political upheavals, situations of economic recession and the natural disasters that afflict many countries have very serious consequences that tend to augment the numbers of those who take refuge from adversity by giving in to the temptation of drug abuse and addiction.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm that combating drugs is not merely a national or regional question, but also an international issue that must be addressed in the interests of all mankind.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I now call on Dr. Isaac Barreto Ribeiro, President of the Federal Drug Council of Brazil.

Mr. BARRETO RIBEIRO (Brazil) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The subject of drugs belongs to a class of problems about which two things can be said with certainty. The first is that we recognize the global scope of the problem. The second is that we are aware that any proposed solutions require broad international cooperation.

For this reason, both the clear political will of States, as shown by the implementation of international agreements, and the effective implementation, by common accord, of measures to deal with the problem might seem to give us sufficient reason to imagine a future in which drugs, although still a cause for concern, would no longer be a serious threat to the very survival of society.

Yet it is rather surprising that recent reports on the problem give the impression that, despite all that has been done, the drug situation is in many respects the same as it was some years ago. That is certainly not because of inertia or lack of action.

The drugs division of the Federal Police, in trying to stamp out drugs, is currently carrying out 11 programmes.

First, there is the cannabis eradication programme. In 1992 more than 2 million cannabis plants were uprooted. The same year about 19.5 tons of consumption-ready cannabis were confiscated. This year we have already uprooted more than 2.1 million cannabis plants. Rural farmland used for illegal planting can be confiscated and returned to the State.

Second, there is the programme to eradicate *epadú*, also known as Brazilian coca. As a result of the activities of the Federal Police, the amount of land used to cultivate *epadú* is diminishing year by year.

Third, we have a programme to combat organized crime. This involves exchanging information on drug traffickers between various specialized agencies that deal with combating drugs.

Fourth, we have a programme to combat the cartels. As proof of the success of this programme, the Federal Police have been able to prevent almost 7,000 tons of cocaine from coming onto the consumer market.

Fifth, there is a programme to control precursor chemicals and derivatives used in manufacturing drugs. Using computers, we have been able to achieve better control over the flow of substances under international control.

Sixth, we have a programme employing trained sniffer dogs to interdict illicit drugs.

Seventh, we are running a programme of symposiums to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs.

Eighth, there is a programme to monitor our rivers and coasts.

Ninth, we have a programme to intercept radio communications in the Amazon region.

Tenth, we have a programme to interdict drugs in our ports and airports.

Eleventh, we have a computerization programme so that we can set up a data bank.

These are the main activities currently being carried out by the Federal Police in trying to stamp out illicit drugs.

In the area of prevention and rehabilitation, the Federal Narcotics Council, the central body responsible for national drug policy in Brazil, has approved a national drug plan, whose guidelines include systemizing the available information on the drug situation, training drug prevention agents, mobilizing the community and improving the relevant legislation.

In order to achieve the goals of our national drug policy, we have identified the following strategies: first, development of an epidemiological census so that we can view the problem from all aspects in as much detail as possible; secondly, setting up a national system of prevention; thirdly, together with the press, the carrying out of consciousness-raising and prevention campaigns; fourthly, training experts in drug prevention; fifthly trying to raise communities' awareness so that they will support campaigns to prevent and treat drug abuse and to rehabilitate addicts; sixthly use of the education system as the primary prevention mechanism; and, seventhly, adapting the basic health care system to treat drug users.

Brazil has always tried to contribute to the international cooperative effort to combat drugs. Similarly, it has always tried to increase the means available to meet this challenge on the domestic front.

Since taking office President Itamar Franco has impressed on the Government the importance of respecting ethical principles. The fight against drugs must be a fight for ethics, waged ethically. It must also be a struggle that does not lose sight of the principles of law and, above all, respect for human rights.

The meeting rose at 8 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

41st
PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, 28 October 1993
at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

ADDRESS BY THE REVEREND FATHER JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Haiti.

The Reverend Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency the Reverend Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President ARISTIDE *(interpretation from French)*: I am happy to greet the Assembly on behalf of the people of Haiti.

Together with Prime Minister Robert Malval and the Haitian ministers and diplomats present here, I offer my thanks to the United Nations and to all those who are with us on the road to restoring democracy to Haiti.

Particular thanks go to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), President Bill Clinton, Special Envoy Dante Caputo, Special Advisor Lawrence Pezzullo, and the four friendly countries of Canada, France, Venezuela and the United States of America.

I cannot fail to mention all the other friends in the Caribbean, America, Europe and Asia who are so dear to us and have given us such a warm welcome. Among others, we refer to the Republic of China in Taiwan, which we hope will soon regain its place in the great family of the United Nations.

In 1492, the peoples of Africa reached the new world. Half a millennium has already elapsed since then - 500 years of history that have reaped abundant cultural and liberating harvests. From 1791 to 1804, under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Haiti won its independence and the life-force of freedom has become blood of our blood and flesh of our flesh.

We are alive. Haiti will live. Haiti is us. We are Haiti.

Undoubtedly there have been ups and downs and there will continue to be. Nevertheless, nothing can prevent us from defending our inalienable and undeniable right to life, to liberty and to the quest for happiness in accordance with our Act of Independence of 1804 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

It is with great joy that we find these same fundamental values set forth in the American Declaration of Independence, namely:

> "... that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable

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ENGLISH

Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness ...".

Haiti, which was the richest French colony in the eighteenth century, must be a nation that is socially just, economically free and politically independent.

When political science as a separate professional discipline focused its attention on the State it gave some rational guidelines for building a State of law. Over and above political storms in our country we shall re-establish a stable State built on law.

Democratic restoration implies: ideological pluralism, political change and economic growth. The scientific underpinnings of this process, let us repeat, involve a political equation to be drawn between reconciliation and justice. Reconciliation among all and justice for all.

What is at stake is peace - at the national level, in the hemisphere and in the world. We cannot sketch the main outlines of the new world order without of necessity involving democracy. Democracy and non-violence are inextricably connected. Democracy and institutionalized violence are incompatible. Haiti is now suffering from structural and age-old violence. The *coup d'état* brought about a real genocide. In legal language the assassination of a people can only be called one thing, and that is genocide. The purpose is to annihilate in order to dominate; to dominate in order to do away with the democratic process and replace it by neocolonialism. If we can accept slavery, we can accept anything, Abraham Lincoln said in 1864.

Likewise we see Pétion, President of the Republic of Haiti, welcoming Bolivar, who had been vanquished by the troops of Ferdinand VII, and providing him with asylum and assistance in order to do away with slavery in Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru.

Today, as at Crête-à-Pierrot, Dessalines would heroically restate: "We will all die for freedom". Captain Fritz Pierre-Louis died for freedom and democracy; our brother Antoine Izméry died for freedom and democracy; our brother Guy Malary, Minister of Justice, died for freedom and democracy; and more than 4,000 Haitians have died for freedom and democracy. May they all rest in peace.

This institutionalized violence prevents the free exercise of the human rights which are formally guaranteed by the Constitution. Fortunately, by restoring democracy we intend to promote the dawn of Haitian creativity and the transformation of our living conditions. Slowly but surely we will pass from destitution to poverty with dignity.

Our 6,900,000 compatriots, of whom 2 million live in urban areas and 4,900,000 in rural areas, will reap the harvest of peace and joy. The quality of life will be better. The infant mortality rate will no longer be 94 per 1,000. Unemployment will no longer vary between 70 per cent and 80 per cent. Ninety per cent of the urban population will no longer live in shanty towns. We will no longer have one soldier per 1,000 inhabitants, 1.8 doctors for 10,000 inhabitants, or an army of 7,000 people absorbing 40 per cent of the national budget. The quality of life will be better.

It is our hope that the technical assistance we have requested from the United Nations will make it possible at last to make the army professional. I should like to take this occasion to send a message of peace to the officers and men of the army of Haiti. As guarantor of national independence and territorial integrity, the President of the Republic recalls that the armed forces are non-political - Article 265; and the police were created to maintain public order and to protect the life and property of citizens - article 269.

On 15 October last the armed forces and the police should finally have been free of their superior officers. Late, but not too late. They will have to leave. This flagrant violation of the Governors Island Agreement can only dramatically accelerate the headlong rush to national breakdown. Late, but not too late. They will have to leave.

The end of the cold war has sounded the death knell of dictatorship and has opened the way to responsible negotiation. No human being can live in a ridiculous and chaotic world. We must build a State of law ensuring the separation and harmonious distribution of the powers of the State to serve the fundamental interests of the nation at large.

In this context we deem it necessary to recall the six proposals which were shared last July with the private sector in Haiti. Once we have returned we shall do the following: first, take effective steps at the meso-economic level, that is, measures that will establish a relationship between the macroeconomic and micro-economic levels, which have a direct impact on the daily life of the people and will lead to the necessary degree of decentralization; secondly, set in motion a legal process for the rational management of State resources, for budgetary readjustments and in order to reform the tax and banking systems; thirdly, create a State of law with a judicious macroeconomic policy that will encourage the creation of productive and remunerative jobs; fourthly, revamp the synergetic relationship between the public and private sectors; fifthly, correct market deficiencies by combating drugs, corruption and smuggling; and, sixthly, make it possible for the market to function properly by ensuring that there is free competition.

In this connection, article 245 of the Constitution states:

> "Economic freedom is guaranteed as long as it is not opposed to social interests. The State protects private enterprise and does everything to ensure that it develops under the conditions necessary to increase national wealth in order to ensure that the largest number of people share in the benefits of that wealth."

Dear friends, James in the *Black Jacobins* wrote that no part of the world, as far as its surface was concerned, had so much wealth as the colony of Santo Domingo. That is quite true. It is also true that Haiti today is one of the wealthiest pieces of land in the world: it is rich in human, cultural and artistic values.

(spoke in Creole)

> *(The speaker did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)*

(spoke in French)

The most realistic projections for the year 2000 indicate that 2,600,000 inhabitants - that is, 65 per cent of the urban population - will have no prospects whatsoever of access to drinking water. The implementation of our economic policy should avert this catastrophe. In the year 2000 more than 60 per cent of children under the age of 12 months will be unable to receive vaccinations. This is another challenge to take up. Within seven years our forests will have disappeared. Two years ago only 1.5 per cent of our forest cover was left, which is why we lose every year 36.6 million metric tons of land.

Only the restoration of democracy can save our country from this ecological catastrophe. Let us not even mention the massive outflow of boat people. Once we have returned to the land of our birth we shall restore peace, and then the sea will no longer claim our soil and our souls. We said before: "Boat people, nevermore." Upon our return we shall say: "Boat people, nevermore."

We shall say again: "Licence to traffic in drugs, nevermore." Only the restoration of democracy can prevent Haiti from being the second country in the hemisphere in terms of involvement in drug trafficking. Since the *coup d'état* about 48 metric tons of cocaine have passed through Haiti every year. Their destination? North America, above all. The annual market value of this drug adds up to $1.2 billion, of which more than $200 million goes to the putschists and their allies. When we return to the land of our birth, the Haitian and United States Governments, united as always, will protect each other from this violent scourge.

When we return to the land of our birth, by mobilizing all our human resources and making optimal use of the assistance of friendly countries, we shall be able to implement an urgent employment programme, which will involve, first, refurbishment of the roadway infrastructure, comprising 1,406 kilometres; secondly, protection of drinking-water supply systems for 1 million inhabitants; thirdly, protection of agricultural irrigation systems covering 200,000 plots of land; fourthly, shoring up of the main towns and protection of the areas threatened by erosion, including, in particular, 300 kilometres of ravines; and, fifthly, promotion of integrated rural development.

Let us recall that 63 per cent of the active population is employed in the rural areas, whence comes 27 per cent of the gross national product. The industrial sector, on the other hand, employs 5.7 per cent of the active population and produces 15 per cent of the gross national product.

Working with the private sector in Haiti, we shall have to find the best way to provide many more jobs for both the medium and the long term. Since the *coup d'état* we have lost 30,000 jobs in the assembly and export industries. Relaunching tourism will provide 1,000 jobs. Building schools and repairing 1,200 schools in disadvantaged areas will contribute to reducing the ranks of the unemployed.

The first mission of the State and of the territorial collectives is to provide schooling for the masses; this is the only way we can develop the country. The State and the territorial collectives must make free schooling available to all: articles 32.1 and 32.2.

Furthermore, the Head of State, as the guarantor of respect for the Constitution, will endeavour to strengthen the democratic institutions set out in the Constitution.

Justice for all; transparency in all; participation by all.

The Head of State will also reinforce the independence of the legislative power by helping the members of Parliament prepare themselves and by fostering harmonious relations between the two branches. There will soon have to be a permanent electoral council to organize legislative elections for 1994. I take this opportunity to urge the political parties and the members of the opposition to stimulate the democratic process for the nation's well-being.

As the President of each and every Haitian, I urge all to transcend political differences and build unity in diversity. Young people of Haiti, women of Haiti, peasants' groups, trade unions, people's organizations, social and professional organizations: let us all march together. Rich or poor, military or civilian: let us say no to vengeance, no to violence, no to impunity, yes to reconciliation, yes to justice. Let us all march together. There is strength in union.

(spoke in Creole)

> *(The speaker did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)*

(spoke in French)

Yes, geopolitical evolution depends on unity. On the threshold of a new era, tolerance and active benevolence benefit all mankind. Geopolitical evolution depends both on the relationship between economic forces and on democratic growth. Yes, from humanity there can arise a new world order based on mutual respect and new structures that are intended to guarantee peace, security and dialogue. Dialogue between men and women will be the topmost of our national and international priorities, a dialogue between men and women whose intelligence is a guiding light for democratic civilization. There will be dialogue between all of us, dialogue between the members of this Assembly, who are intelligent. *Vis consili expers mole ruit sua:* force without intelligence is crushed by its own weight, as Horace said. Guided by the light of intelligence, men and women of Haiti will easily understand that

(spoke in Creole)

> *(The speaker did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)*

(spoke in French)

They will easily understand that

(spoke in Creole)

> *(The speaker did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)*

(spoke in French)

Yes, we Haitians, we who desire peace and who shall create peace, easily understand the importance of reconciliation and justice. This is why, first, we respected from the outset the Governors Island Agreement; secondly, we ask for a total blockade, which is necessary - nay, absolutely essential; thirdly, if tomorrow morning General Cédras, the members of the High Command and the Military Staff, and Colonel Michel François and his allies leave, then tomorrow afternoon I shall, in agreement with the Presidents of the Senate and the House of Deputies, summon Parliament to vote on the bill regarding the police and the one on amnesty, in accordance with article 147 of the Constitution, the Governors Island Agreement and the New York Pact.

Fourthly, the Prime Minister and the members of the Ministerial Cabinet, to whom we would address our warmest congratulations, are invited not to resign, in solidarity with the people of Haiti. On 30 October, it is not a matter of choice between returning or not returning. It is a choice between departure and lateness.

(spoke in Creole)

> *(The speaker did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.)*

(spoke in French)

Men and women of Haiti, the horizons of the future are wide open. Upright like the palm-bearer of freedom, let us march together. Let us build peace. Let us construct law. Let us restore democracy. All, sons and daughters of the motherland of Toussaint-Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, let us be united for the rebirth of the nation. To all of you, peace, love and happiness.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the

President of Haiti for the important statement he has just made.

The Reverend Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform delegations that with regard to agenda item 21, "Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin", which is to be considered next Tuesday, 2 November, the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/466) is now available at the documents counter.

Similarly, with regard to agenda item 30, "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", which is to be considered next Wednesday, 3 November, the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/448) is also now available at the documents counter.

AGENDA ITEM 11

REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (A/48/2)

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the President of the Security Council, who will introduce the report of the Security Council (A/48/2).

Mr. SARDENBERG (President of the Security Council): I am honoured and pleased to have the opportunity to address the General Assembly as President of the Security Council to introduce the annual report of the Council covering the period 16 June 1992 to 15 June 1993, which has been distributed to all delegations in document A/48/2.

The members of the Security Council attach great importance to the timely preparation and submission of the annual report to the General Assembly, as provided for in Articles 15 and 24 of the United Nations Charter.

Consideration of the Council's report by the General Assembly constitutes a privileged occasion for the necessary dialogue and interaction between these two principal organs of the United Nations. It is thus an important element enabling both organs to exercise, in a mutually reinforcing manner, their respective competences in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Due to a delay in the presentation of the previous report, the General Assembly was not able to consider it in the course of 1992. To prevent such a regrettable delay from recurring, the Security Council requested the Secretariat to submit the draft report to members of the Council immediately following the period covered by the report, so that it might be adopted by the Council in time to permit the General Assembly to consider it during the main part of its regular session, as it is doing today. I wish to thank the Secretariat for the work it put into preparing the draft report on time.

The report reflects the increased amount of work done by the Council in responding to problems related to international peace and security. It is not for me, as President, to comment on this occasion on the substance of that work, except perhaps to say that the voluminous content of the document indicates the need for continued attention and action by the United Nations to face the numerous challenges persisting or emerging in a changing international scene. The positive trends towards greater international cooperation and understanding by no means exclude the existence of serious threats to international peace. In facing these challenges, the Security Council is constantly confronted with the difficult task of preserving and increasing the efficiency of its work to ensure the prompt and effective action that is required with respect to international peace and security, in accordance with the norms and principles of the Charter.

The more that action becomes important and effective, the more we should stress the fact that it involves a responsibility that is conferred upon the Security Council by all the Member States of the United Nations. Such action is carried out by the Council on their behalf, as provided for in Article 24 of the Charter, and it is essential that all Member States contribute to the work that is done on their behalf.

I have no doubt that the members of the Security Council are aware of the need to address the question of how best to strike a balance between efficiency and transparency in the work of the Council. Last June the Council established an informal working group to consider suggestions concerning documentation, including the annual report and related matters. As a result, the Council has adopted a number of procedural measures that will no doubt contribute to enhancing its work and provide a useful foundation on which to build.

Some of these measures are directly related to the question of how to provide information to States that are not members of the Security Council. The Council agreed, in particular, on the following matters.

First, the draft of the annual report will no longer be issued as a confidential document and will be adopted at a public meeting of the Security Council - not a private meeting, as in the past - at which the draft report is to be made available to all interested delegations. This procedure was observed for the first time in the adoption of the report I have the honour to introduce today.

Secondly, the Secretariat will bring to the attention of the Council all cases in which a resolution or a Presidential statement contains references to unpublished documents, in which cases the Council will consider the official publication of the document, thus making it readily available for consultation by interested delegations.

Thirdly, the provisional agenda for formal meetings of the Council will be included in the *Journal of the United Nations* whenever it has already been approved in informal consultations.

Finally, the monthly forecast of the Council's programme of work prepared by the Secretariat will be distributed to all Member States at the beginning of each month.

An effort is also being made to make the titles of Security Council agenda items more descriptive, avoiding mere references to letters or reports received.

These first measures are already being implemented.

The Council furthermore agreed that the question of ways to provide information to States that are not members of the Council will be kept under due consideration, with a view to enhancing its practice in this regard.

Another useful step in the same direction is the new practice, which started a few months ago, of regular consultations by the President of the Security Council with the President of the General Assembly and, separately, with the Chairmen of each of the five regional groups, within their respective mandates. I am convinced that these and possibly other new channels of dialogue can be profitably explored to the benefit of the work of the Council, which must be responsive to the interests and concerns of the membership at large.

In addition to those measures, the Council has also considered the need to make its annual report an easier and more useful reference document for all Member States. To that end, the report now submitted by the Council incorporates a number of changes in its format: it includes a new appendix with a list of all Presidential statements issued during the period under review, with an indication of the date of issuance and the corresponding agenda item or subject matter; it provides cross-references to the relevant chapter, section and subsection for each resolution and Presidential statement; and, as indicated in the table of contents, agenda items have been regrouped under umbrella headings, so as to allow easier reading.

As indicated in the introduction to the report, it is not intended as a substitute for the official records of the Security Council, which provide a more substantive account of its deliberations. Thus the report should be read, for the purposes of this discussion in the General Assembly, too, in conjunction with other official documents of the Council, to which it constitutes a reference guide.

The members of the Security Council will listen attentively to the debate we are holding here today, and they welcome this opportunity for dialogue.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The presentation of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is of fundamental importance to Colombia because it gives an opportunity for the necessary interaction between the principal organs of the Organization.

Two weeks ago the General Assembly had an opportunity to give its views on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations and the report of the International Court of Justice. Today we have an opportunity to address the development of the work and activities of the Security Council. This is of special importance because of the vital role of the Council in the international arena and the steadily increasing number of functions it has assumed, some of which are in accordance with the Charter, while others go far beyond its fundamental mandate.

I should like first of all to say how pleased I am at the prompt submission of this report, which enables the Assembly to consider it during the main part of its regular session, in contrast to the situation last year, when it was given late consideration in the month of June.

We are also pleased that a number of the criticisms levelled at the Council's procedures have produced concrete results. In this connection it is fitting to point out that the report was considered and approved at an open meeting of the Security Council and that it was published as a limited-distribution document, in keeping with the normal practice of other United Nations bodies.

We would also note the circulation of the Council's monthly programme of work to all Missions, which has facilitated the flow of information within the system. We believe that the inclusion of the provisional agenda of meetings of the Council in the *Journal* to be a good beginning. This, of course, does not mean that the need for greater transparency and information has ceased to exist. In any event, we encourage its members to continue to seek ways to improve the Council's procedures, including the question of working out new and improved ways to provide information to Member States.

Colombia has on a number of occasions noted that the Council's report should reflect, in a detailed, analytical and substantive manner, the tasks accomplished by that body in the exercise of its functions, particularly at a time when greater latitude and flexibility are being applied in defining situations that pose threats to international peace and security. This has meant that the Security Council's tasks have increased, both quantitatively and qualitatively, which has in turn necessarily - and quite rightly - meant that the General Assembly, as the universal body, must be more thoroughly informed of the essence of the Council's work. This question takes on even greater importance at a time when the Council's use of informal consultations as a routine working method has made the timely and open flow of information to all Member States, on an equal basis, far more difficult to achieve.

Unfortunately, once again the Council's report is enumerative and descriptive in nature, and it lacks any assessment or substantive ideas that might give us even a vague notion of the thrust of the deliberations that are held behind closed doors and without written records. We stress this point because it involves the representative nature of the Security Council and its political responsibility *vis-à-vis* the General Assembly. As stipulated in Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of the Members of the United Nations. That is precisely what gives its actions their legitimacy. We are all aware that the ever-growing activities of the Council confer enormous responsibility on the United Nations, a responsibility that is, of course, incumbent upon all Member States, not only from a political standpoint, but from a financial one as well. Thus, the very least we countries that are not members of the Council can ask is that we be informed, and informed well and in a timely and substantive fashion. We believe that the Council should produce the special reports to the General Assembly referred to in Article 24 of the Charter, not only because the items before it are complex and numerous but also because an annual submission forgoes on numerous occasions the political attention such critical issues require. Indeed, it seems to us that a monthly report, corresponding to the change of presidency in the Council, is warranted and that it would improve the information available to member countries.

I should now like to make a few general comments on the report before us.

First, I should like to repeat that Colombia welcomes with optimism the new era of cooperation that is evident on the international scene and here in the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council. It is clear that there is greater cooperation among its members, accompanied by flexibility and a firm resolve to adopt rapid and effective measures. Nevertheless, we are concerned that the work of the United Nations is to a growing degree becoming identified with the work of the Security Council and that as the Council becomes stronger the other organs in the system are being weakened. The automatic linkage of certain questions with the concept of international peace and security is generating a monopoly of issues for the Security Council, and at the same time as the Council's functions are increasing, both quantitatively and qualitatively, other organs with specific competence in particular fields are being left out of the decision-making process.

That situation must be corrected. As we see it, a good part of the problem originates in the Council's tendency to broaden, arbitrarily, the definition of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security. In this connection we are extremely concerned at the abuse of the Council's discretionary powers. We do not believe in the Council's total sovereignty in this area, nor do we believe that it is either healthy or wise. Let us take a look at the current situation.

In recent years, this concept has been broadened to cover very diverse situations, for example, questions involving human rights, which should be taken up in the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and the Third Committee of the General Assembly. The same holds true for questions involving humanitarian assistance, where, as a result of Security Council decisions, the overlapping of political and military questions and questions of a humanitarian nature seems to have created more problems than it has solved, exposing the United Nations to severe criticism and to erosion in international public opinion.

Furthermore, the Council has acted in areas involving the restoration of democracy, when such questions should be acted upon by the General Assembly or the competent regional body. The Council has also assumed authority with regard to legal controversies that are often bilateral in nature and therefore attributed by the Charter to the International Court of Justice.

In addition to those areas, we might also mention all the situations created by internal power struggles, in which the United Nations should refrain from intervening save for exceptional cases as authorized by the Charter and by consistent United Nations practice.

It seems to us that in none of those situations are international peace and security truly threatened. What is more, it is faulty reasoning to argue that non-compliance with an agreement reached between two factions vying internally for power constitutes in itself a threat to international peace and security.

In an era of transition such as ours, the United Nations - above all, the Security Council - needs to be prudent, cautious and responsible in decision-making. The Council is currently formulating policy as regards international peace and security and setting very complex precedents that could prove counterproductive for the United Nations and jeopardize its credibility. We cannot run the risk of being associated now and in the future with loss of prestige, irresponsibility, incompetence or even belligerence. On the contrary, we must be identified with the peaceful political settlement of conflicts, as was the original desire of the countries that signed the San Francisco Charter. It is necessary first to adopt clear and precise criteria as to what constitutes a threat to international peace and security, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Charter and United Nations practice and then to consider potential mechanisms to remedy such situations, thus avoiding hasty reactions with a high political cost to the United Nations and the States that compose it.

In this respect, we reiterate that, as has often been stated in the United Nations, constant recourse to Chapter VII of the Charter as a mechanism to resolve difficult situations is excessive and disproportionate. I emphasize that Chapter VII was originally conceived as an instrument of last resort to deal with situations and circumstances of such gravity that they warranted enforcement action. It cannot be understood as an instrument enabling the Council to place itself above the norms and principles of international law in its actions. In contrast, the mechanisms set out in Chapter VI, on the pacific settlement of disputes, are not being used appropriately; rather, they seem to have been relegated to a secondary level because they are not instruments of force. This policy, of course, deserves profound reflection.

There was constant, recurring reference to the concept of preventive diplomacy in the general debate that concluded a few weeks ago here. In fact, preventive diplomacy is nothing but the effective implementation of the mechanisms contained in Article 33 of our Charter, including, despite what many might wish, recourse to the International Court of Justice. Nevertheless, rhetoric and practice in this area are unfortunately not moving in tandem.

Colombia has repeatedly called for transparency within the Organization, and especially as regards the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. We have advocated greater information and transparency in the deliberations of the Council, because the Assembly is also an integral part of the collective security system and because we are convinced that this would be to the benefit of all, including the Council, since it would ensure the legitimacy of its actions and confidence in its members. With the substantive increase in the functions of the Security Council, transparency in its decisions is virtually imperative.

The Secretary-General himself refers in his report to the need for more formal meetings of the Council and presents a graph showing how the use of secret, informal consultations in recent years has been truly excessive. He recommends that these alternate with a greater number of official meetings. We completely support the Secretary-General on this point. But the public meetings should be for genuine deliberations, since in practice formal meetings have become merely occasions to rubber-stamp decisions that have for the most part already been adopted by a small nucleus of States on the Security Council.

Colombia is prepared to participate in the debate, under agenda item 33, on a review of the composition of the Security Council. It hopes that the Assembly will be able to establish an open-ended working group with a broad and flexible mandate devoted to reform of the Council, including its composition and working procedures. My delegation cannot fail to mention that, in the process of initiating reform of the Council, there is indeed a need for open and universal consultations in every case.

I cannot conclude this statement without offering very special thanks to the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Mr. Ronaldo Sardenberg, who, as President of the Security Council for this month, has come here personally, with a sense of courtesy and responsibility, to submit this report to us.

Mr. REDZUAN (Malaysia): Once again my delegation is participating in this debate to express our concerns and offer some suggestions relating to the report (A/48/2) of the Security Council.

The Malaysian delegation believes that this is an important task, which should be fulfilled by the general membership in a meaningful and constructive manner. The general membership should seriously and carefully examine the Council's report and determine whether the Council has fulfilled its role as defined in the Charter. Members should not refrain from questioning any of the decisions or from making their recommendations when they deem it necessary. This is also an opportunity for members to comment on the workings of the Council. These are indeed important functions for the general membership, given the vastly increased workload and expectations of a more effective Security Council following the end of the cold war and East-West ideological rivalry. So important is our responsibility that as many countries as possible should in fact participate in the debate.

My delegation finds it odd that right in its introductory part the report mentions that it

> "is intended not as a substitute for the records of the Security Council, which constitute the only comprehensive and authoritative account of its deliberations, but as a guide to the activities of the Security Council during the period covered." (*A/48/2, p. 29*)

This is not acceptable, and it is time for the Council to discard such a narrow intention or purpose of the report.

Certainly, Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter call for much more in the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. It cannot be a mere diary of the activities and decisions of the Council. Both Article 15 and Article 24 explicitly establish the obligation of the Security Council to report and be accountable to the General Assembly. There cannot be representation and delegation of power without responsibility and accountability.

In the spirit and letter of Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, my delegation believes that the format and content of the report of the Security Council should be modified and restructured. What is needed is substantive and analytical reporting and not a mere compendium of meetings and decisions. The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization could at least form an appropriate model for the Council to restructure the format and content of its reporting. The report of the Council, like the report of the Secretary-General, should include an objective analysis and comments. The Council's report should also contain explanations of its decisions and should account for its actions or inactions. Ways should also be devised to incorporate the views of the general membership in the report.

In this connection, Malaysia attaches great importance to the work of the informal working group of the General Assembly relating to the revitalization of the work of the Assembly. In resolution 47/233, which was adopted by consensus, we agreed to have substantive debate on annual reports to the General Assembly by the other principal organs of the United Nations and decided to continue consideration of the revitalization process of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session in a comprehensive manner in an informal open-ended working group, which will make proposals, as appropriate, on questions relating to, *inter alia*, the rationalization of the agenda, the reports from the other principal organs of the United Nations in accordance with the Charter and the reports requested by the Secretary-General.

The Malaysian delegation remains seriously concerned about the tendency among the Permanent Five to confine much of the substantive work of the Council to themselves and to turn the Permanent Five into some kind of exclusive club. We are concerned that formal meetings of the Council are becoming increasingly short, more and more *pro forma* occasions, with most discussions and decisions taken in closed informal meetings to the exclusion of interested parties and the general membership. Regrettably, this unhealthy work culture of the Permanent Five is becoming more and more entrenched, affecting the overall work of the Council.

My delegation is disturbed to witness the increasing tendency on the part of certain influential members to be selective in addressing questions of international peace and security that come before the Council. It is a cause of serious concern that the Council is perceived as being manipulated to advance the foreign policy interests of a member or group of members. The concept of United Nations collective security is being undermined by the application of double standards to serve the political interests or expediency of certain permanent members of the Council. The procrastination on and half-hearted approach to ending Serbia's blatant aggression and practice of "ethnic cleansing" in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a clear example of the Council's selectivity and double standards. The Council appears to be locked in a political paralysis, with some influential members weighing the political, financial and manpower costs of getting involved in the crises. The unwillingness on the part of the Council to enforce its own resolutions and to respect General Assembly resolutions 46/242 and 47/121, calling for cessation of hostilities and respect for humanitarian law in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, would definitely undermine the credibility and faith placed in the Security Council and the concept of the United Nations collective security. On Bosnia and - Herzegovina, the Council has repeatedly failed to fulfil its obligation under Article 24 of the Charter to take prompt and effective measures to restore peace and stability. Worse still, the Council continues to deny the inherent right of the victim of aggression and genocide - the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina - to collective or individual self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter.

The effectiveness of the Security Council, in particular, and the United Nations in general, in fulfilling the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security is dependent on its credibility and degree of consistency in the application of the principles of the Charter. I wish to recall again the view of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who stated in his report "An Agenda for Peace" last year that

> "The principles of the Charter must be applied consistently, not selectively, for if the perception should be of the latter, trust will wane and with it the moral authority which is the greatest and most unique quality of that instrument." (*A/47/277, para. 82*)

This fundamental rule should govern the deliberations and decisions of the Security Council.

During this crucial moment in the history of the United Nations, we all wish to see the Security Council effective and unanimously respected for its integrity. In this respect, the Council should strive to gain the trust and confidence of the general membership by reassuring members in practice of the following: that the Council will not be the tool for imposing the will of the strong upon the weak; that the Council will avoid selective and discriminatory approaches to international crises, leading to a condition in which world affairs would de determined by one or a small group of powerful states; that the Council will respect the principle of transparency and democracy in its work and will become responsive to the views of the general membership of the Organization; and, finally, that the Council will not exceed its mandate under the Charter.

As the custodian of international peace and security, the Security Council must, in carrying out its responsibilities on behalf of the Members of the United Nations, act in conformity with the provisions of the Charter, particularly Article 24. In this regard, the Security Council, before taking major decisions or actions, is duty-bound to consult regional groupings, troop-contributing countries and the general membership. Security Council resolutions should reflect the common will of the international community and not serve the narrow interests of the permanent members and their allies. As the Secretary-General observed in his report "An Agenda for Peace",

> "agreement among the permanent members of the Council must have the deeper support of the other members of the Council, and the membership more widely, if the Council's decisions are to be effective and endure." (*A/47/277, para. 78*)

The members of the Security Council should always bear in mind that their representation in the Council extends beyond one's own national entity. The permanent members have a special responsibility because of the privileges accorded to them by the international community as a whole. Accordingly, their positions should not be dictated by the confines of their narrow national interests. As for the non-permanent members, they have a larger duty to a larger constituency - the regional group that they come from and the other members that elected them. They should not succumb to pressure or manipulation by the influential members of the Council.

At the same time, my delegation recognizes that there have been some positive changes taking place lately at the Security Council with regard to its work and documentation. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the month of August, Ambassador Albright of the United States, for her initiative to bring about greater transparency in the work of the Council. During her presidency, there were efforts to consult interested parties and the general membership on many issues that were before the Council. This positive attitude should be encouraged and indeed adopted as a standard working procedure by the Security Council.

My delegation also welcomes the Council's decision, as contained in the note by the President, document S/26176 of 27 July 1993, to transmit their tentative forecast of the programme of work for each month to all Member States. This positive action, we believe, should also be extended to include other relevant documents of the Security Council, in particular statements or intervention notes of the Secretariat or members of the Council made during informal consultations, including draft resolutions being negotiated. The decision of the Security Council to include in the daily *Journal of the United Nations* the provisional agenda of its formal meetings also deserves our appreciation. We hope that in the near future the Security Council will adopt other measures necessary to bring about more transparency in its work.

An important aspect of the work of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security which is missing from the annual report is the question of financing. On this crucial subject, the Malaysian delegation shares the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization for this year, that

> "the United Nations cannot resolve the major problems on the international agenda in the absence of the political will, sufficient support and continuing commitment which each particular endeavour requires." *(A/48/1, para. 23)*

In order to avoid any long-term negative effects, it is imperative that all States, particularly the big contributors, pay their assessed contributions in full and on time in accordance with their statutory obligations to the Organization as provided for in Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

In conclusion, I must underline Malaysia's strongly held view that the Security Council cannot function effectively and be more representative if we fail to expand its membership to reflect the dramatic increase in the membership of the United Nations as a whole, which now stands at 184, and to reform its method of work. That is why the Malaysian delegation and the other members of the Non-Aligned Movement are determined to restructure the Council to reflect a more equitable and balanced geographical representation and to reform the inner workings of the Council so that there is accountability, democracy and transparency, leading to a harmonious relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, while making the Council more effective in carrying out its duties under the Charter.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed now.

It was so decided.

Mr. RAMIREZ de ESTENOZ (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I wish first to convey my delegation's appreciation of the statement made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Brazil, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, when he introduced the Council's report to the General Assembly. We believe that this action by the President of the Council, and Brazil's ongoing interest in improving the quality and content of the Council's report, not only constitute a step in the right direction but also hold the promise of future progress towards the Security Council's giving a genuine accounting of its activities to the General Assembly, as clearly stipulated in the Charter.

The Brazilian initiative is all the more praiseworthy compared with the situation of previous years, when the report of the Security Council was not even properly introduced to the Assembly and when many Council members were not present in the Hall for the debate. We hope the new procedure will become a tradition followed by future Presidents of the Security Council.

We are also pleased to note the commendable effort of the Secretariat to prevent the recurrence of last year's disgraceful situation and to ensure that the Assembly could consider the report of the Security Council at the proper time.

We attach special importance to the continuing increase in the number of delegations participating in the debate. In our view, the report of the Security Council should be the object of serious interest by all delegations, since not only has the Council become the most active of United Nations organs, but its activities increasingly affect a growing number of countries.

It should be recalled that this item appears on the agenda of the General Assembly because of provisions of the Charter. Article 15 states that the Security Council should submit an annual report to the General Assembly, because, as stated in Article 24 of the Charter, the powers of the Security Council are conferred on it by the Members of the United Nations - that is, by the General Assembly, acting on their behalf. In other words, as it considers this report, the General Assembly is not - or should not be - only taking note of matters of the highest interest and priority to the international community, but is also fulfilling its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations.

Yet, as we have said on previous occasions, the content of the report is not such that the General Assembly can fully and effectively carry out its responsibilities. In its present form, the report of the Security Council could perhaps be useful to libraries or documentation centres, but it is not useful to the State delegations that must, in accordance with the Charter, assess the actions the Council takes on their behalf and determine whether or not the powers we ourselves have conferred upon the Security Council are being used in the best possible way.

The delegation of Cuba is among those that, both on and off the Security Council, has systematically criticized the partial and cursory way the Council's work is presented to the General Assembly. We note that this time some positive changes have been made, thanks to the efforts of some members of the Security Council. But the report still completely lacks the analytic information that would enable us to assess what the Council has or has not done.

That observation relates to the growing demands for greater transparency in the work of the Council. The Council's current practices, characterized by the closed and secret nature of the vast majority of the substantive deliberations of its members, make it ever more necessary to meet our demand for an analytical, complete and integral report.

Other elements of the activities of the Council are also linked with the item before us. The Security Council is exhibiting a growing tendency to appropriate many aspects of the work of the Organization that have nothing to do with the authority conferred upon it by the Charter. It has given itself the right - a right no one else has given it - to determine on its own when a situation constitutes a threat to international peace and security and when it does not; this gives rise to a growing tendency to interfere in the internal affairs of States. The Council has arrogated to itself the power, without guidelines from the democratic bodies of the Organization, to determine when it is necessary to apply Chapter VII of the Charter. For today's Security Council - and above all for certain of its permanent members - the Council is the only valid forum of the United Nations; they conveniently forget that each United Nations organ has its own functions and powers.

Summarizing, I should say that there is an ever-increasing tendency for that organ to act as an autonomous entity. This is extremely dangerous, given its responsibilities in respect of international peace and security and, hence, its power to impose sanctions or to use force. It is also a matter for concern that the Security Council, whenever it takes action - however basic - in connection with a situation brought to its attention, decides immediately to remain seized of the subject. This prevents action by other United Nations organs that could make a valuable contribution to the solution of conflicts and controversies.

We believe that every Member of this Organization could say a great deal about the way in which the Security Council operates. I refer, for example, to the excessive proliferation of peace-keeping operations and to the way in which given situations are manipulated so that the Council's decisions may be brought into line with the policies of the big Powers - in other words, so that the Council may become a sort of universal police force.

This is why appropriate information from Member States, appropriate structuring and analysis in the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly, and even special reports when they are warranted by circumstances - as provided for in the Charter - are not only necessary but, indeed, vital if this Organization is to become truly democratic and if it is to fulfil completely the purposes and principles for which it was designed. Would not the General Assembly be doing something worthwhile if, at this session, it were to decide to ask the Security Council for special, thorough, detailed, analytical reports on some of the Council's most important and controversial operations?

Nothing that the Council does, or fails to do, should be kept from the Members of this Organization, on whose behalf, I repeat, that organ acts. In the document that we are now considering - and this is something that must be said - there is not a single word about the real discussions that have taken place in the Security Council. As we see it, this is a virtual violation of the United Nations Charter and of its stipulations concerning the Council's responsibility to report to the General Assembly. Thus, the Assembly is deprived of legitimate powers, including the power to make recommendations to the Security Council with regard to the Council's activities or working methods.

We have no doubt that if this function is to be discharged, States Members of the Organization must ensure that the General Assembly has the means to discharge it. They must ensure that the Assembly has the means of carrying out its functions - functions given to it by the Charter - with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Above all, it must be enabled to exercise the powers that it has by virtue of Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the instrument that guides our work. We hope that future negotiations on revitalization of the General Assembly will take all these issues properly into account and that conclusions will be arrived at.

Mr. Pursoo (Grenada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

I do not want to repeat what my delegation said just a few months ago, in a similar debate, about what the Security Council's report to the General Assembly should contain. None the less, I wish to reiterate that the report should include not only references to the official documents that were before, and were adopted by, the Council, but also - and this is much more important - an analytical summary of the discussions that took place in the framework of the so-called plenary informal consultations, which, because of the none-too-democratic policy that has been imposed on the Council, have become its real debates. In this connection, the report should also duly reflect the information that is often conveyed verbally to the Council by high-ranking members of the Secretariat, as well as the texts of letters exchanged by the President of the Council and the Secretary-General, where these are not published as official documents of the United Nations, and records of the subsidiary bodies of the Council, which are also of extreme interest to Member States.

At the same time, the report must have a much more functional structure - one that can be adapted to the new, analytical contents we are advocating. This is the only way of enabling us to determine the real thrust of the Council's work over the year and to analyse its results, even if not too thoroughly - results that should be seen in political terms, and not merely as a catalogue.

Matters related to the Security Council's report to the General Assembly are just one of the elements in respect of which important changes in the Council's work are necessary. We believe that at a time when we are asked to work hard at restructuring the economic and social spheres and to reform the Secretariat radically, we must also make substantive changes in the working methods of that other principal body.

Of course, the increase in the membership of the Security Council - a subject that will soon be considered in this Hall - is a fundamental aspect of the essential restructuring of the Council. However, we must not neglect the fact that, together with the expansion of the membership, the question of the equitable distribution of all Council seats needs serious consideration. We firmly believe that when the composition of, and the distribution of authority within, the Council are more just and more equitable, that organ will be able to discharge its responsibilities more effectively and more completely.

At the present time, we are talking about, and trying to take action on, revitalization of the General Assembly. How better could the Assembly be revitalized than by being enabled to fulfil completely its responsibilities with respect to the Security Council, which, according to our institutional rules, must report to it?

We urge all Members of the Organization to give serious consideration to this question, as a first step in the necessary and much-called-for reform of the Security Council. If we fail in this regard, we shall be avoiding our responsibilities as Members. If the Security Council does not succeed in changing substantially its mechanisms for reporting to the General Assembly, in such a way as to meet the aspirations of all Members of the Organization, the Assembly will have to be prepared, sooner rather than later, to make the necessary recommendations in this respect.

I want to say, in conclusion, that, as the Security Council is the United Nations organ most in need of profound reform, it is urgent that words yield to deeds so that the very future of the Organization may be secured.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) *(interpretation from French)*: I should like, first, to express our appreciation to Ambassador Sardenberg, the President of the Security Council, for his introductory remarks. His presentation to the General Assembly of the report of this principal organ is in itself a sign of a new spirit of cooperation, which we welcome wholeheartedly.

In the period since the debate on the Security Council report that took place last June, during the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, a number of innovations have been made with a view to meeting the concerns expressed by the Assembly. For example, the report has been published on schedule and made available during the first half of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, in contrast to the delays observed previously.

Likewise, this document was, for the first time, adopted by the Council at a public meeting, and contains a new appendix which lists in chronological order the statements made or issued by the President of the Security Council in the period covered.

We have also noted the deliberate effort to achieve greater transparency by disseminating to all Member States the monthly programme of activities of the Council and particularly by initiating, last August, a process of informal consultation with the Chairmen of regional groups. Provided that these consultations were held on a regular and systematic basis and that they dealt with the substance of the Council's activities, they would not only respond to the legitimate concern for transparency but would also enhance the Council's effectiveness. It is at least an opening and should be encouraged and enlarged upon with a view to enabling the Council to draw on the fund of experience and expertise available outside it, among the States Members of the United Nations. Such an opening, which we fervently desire, can help the Council accomplish its missions in the face of increasingly complex crises.

The positive changes observed over the past few months have already responded, at least partially, to the wishes and aspirations of Member States. Nevertheless, the legal and political context in which the report of the Security Council should be considered by the General Assembly, as suggested by a combined reading of Articles 15 and 24 of the United Nations Charter, calls for additional measures on the triple basis of the structure and content of the report, the transparency of the Council's work, and respect for the functions of the General Assembly.

First, the Council's report could usefully be supplemented by an analytical section summarizing the substantive work done by the Council and placing in context the approaches taken and the stakes underlying them. Such an analysis is essential if the General Assembly is to engage in a substantive debate or even in a dialogue with the Security Council, and thus be in a position to properly discharge the responsibility conferred upon it by Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter.

Secondly, a balance must be found between the use of informal consultations, the usefulness of which cannot be questioned, and the duty adequately to inform the international community in whose name the Council acts and to remain continually receptive to its reactions.

Thirdly, the Council's prerogatives do not, as we know, exclude the General Assembly from exercising its own prerogatives, particularly where international peace and security are concerned. Full weight and significance should attach to the stipulations of Article 11 of the Charter, which empowers the General Assembly to consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, and to discuss any questions relating to that matter and to make recommendations, including recommendations to the Security Council.

Thus, under the terms of the Charter, there is at least shared competence between the General Assembly and the Security Council regarding the maintenance of international peace and security: reflection, study and the drawing up of recommendations being the responsibilities of the Assembly, while the Security Council's mandate is rather to deal in a concrete fashion with specific conflicts and to take appropriate actions to resolve them.

The founders of our Organization were fully aware of the importance of creating a balance between its main bodies, and particularly between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Respect for this equilibrium, set forth in the Charter, is of paramount importance, not only for the General Assembly as the universal and democratic forum comprising all Member States, but also for the Security Council itself. The harmony and effectiveness of the United Nations system are essentially based on a balanced and complementary relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council with respect for their individual attributes, as foreseen in the Charter.

In the light of all these considerations, it is clear that under the spirit and the letter of the Charter, the consideration of the Security Council's report by the General Assembly cannot be a mere procedural formality, consisting of taking note of this report without considering it or making any recommendations on it. The current trend seems conducive to a review of this practice, which the conditions prevailing during the cold war largely contributed to bringing about.

The end of the cold war, the reappraisal of the practices and work methods as well as the very structures of our Organization, including in particular the question of enlarging the membership of the Security Council, all militate in favour of a collective effort for a concerted improvement in the functioning of the Security Council.

This would, quite clearly, be a major contribution to the democratization of the functioning of our Organization and the rationalization of its work methods and, ultimately, a strengthening of its effectiveness and its role.

Mr. ZAPATA (Philippines): At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of Brazil, for introducing the Council's report. We note the efforts of the Council to improve the provision of information on the Council's activities and decisions to all Member States, and we encourage the Council to continue making these efforts.

In its resolution 47/233 the General Assembly encourages Member States to participate actively in a substantive and in-depth discussion and consideration of the reports of the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

In this regard, it is indeed encouraging that we have received the latest report of the Council in time for our debate and that the period it covers is fairly up to date. Nevertheless, my delegation feels constrained to abide fully by the intent of resolution 47/233 on this matter, because it feels that the current format and content of the report do not provide an adequate basis for us to engage in a truly meaningful debate on the activities and work of the Council for the period under consideration. Nor is it possible, in our view, for such debate to be particularly current if we are to use the present report as a basis.

I wish, therefore, to confine my brief remarks to the report's content and presentation rather than to the substance of the particular issues contained in it - important as they are - with a view to suggesting certain changes in these areas.

The Philippines believes that the possibility for substantive consideration of the report would be considerably increased if additional changes were made in its format, content and timing, though we also note the latest efforts of the Council to improve its report to the General Assembly. We thus share the view of other delegations that the Council's report should be improved. Our foremost consideration in this respect is to enhance the General Assembly's ability to consider and respond substantively to the Council's actions and thus effectively fulfil its role as enshrined in the Charter, especially with respect to Articles 10, 13 and 14, which in turn, we believe, is the main intent behind Article 15. We further believe that these changes could be accomplished without expanding the length of the report. In fact, ways could be explored to shorten the report.

The Council's report is a reflection of its accountability to the General Assembly, which arises from the fact that the Council is mandated by the Member States to act on their behalf in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council's report should thus provide the means for Member States to assess its actions and, where necessary, respond or make appropriate recommendations on these actions to the Council in a timely and relevant fashion. Any weakening of this accountability, such as through outdated or insufficient information in the report, could eventually undermine the Council's effectiveness, efficiency and moral authority.

The need for a more frequent and analytical report of the Council has also become more necessary today in view of the Council's active and more prominent role in addressing international peace and security issues, as well as its more frequent resort to closed and relatively non-transparent informal consultations as an essential part of its decision-making process. The report should thus also serve as a means for Member States that are not members of the Council to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the reasons and factors behind a particular course of action adopted by the Council.

My delegation believes specific proposals to improve the reports of the Council to the General Assembly could be thoroughly discussed by the informal open-ended working group established by General Assembly resolution 47/233. We further believe that the working group, after considering all proposals on this matter, should make appropriate recommendations for the consideration of the Assembly. However, our general debate today could be a useful input for the informal group's deliberations. Bearing this in mind, I wish to suggest certain general improvements in the report which could enhance the Assembly's ability to deliberate upon it more effectively. This, in turn, would reinforce efforts to revitalize the Assembly and improve coordination between the Council and the Assembly on matters affecting international peace and security.

First and foremost, the Philippines believes that the report should be analytical in nature and not limited to a record of decisions and resolutions adopted by the Council. It should include a concise analysis of decisions taken and a summary of the Council's discussions and debates on each substantive issue covered during the period under consideration. This should include discussions in both the Council's formal sessions and the closed informal consultations of the whole. A brief write-up on the status of each substantive issue discussed in the main report would also be very useful.

These changes alone, in our view, would create a solid basis for a substantive exchange of views by the General Assembly on the activities and decisions taken by the Council during the period in question. There are, however, other possible improvements which could be considered. Bearing in mind unforeseen events and emergencies, the report could also outline a preliminary forecast of the annual programme of work of the Council, particularly on issues in the preceding report identified as requiring the Council's continued debate or further action. The possible type of action should also be indicated, if possible. The forecast could be updated monthly.

A section on the activities and decisions of subsidiary bodies of the Council, such as the sanctions committees, during the period in question could also be reflected in the report. We also believe that a section on administrative and financial issues facing the Council would be of interest to many delegations.

Finally, the report should be made available and circulated in a timely fashion, preferably during the beginning or within the first quarter of each year, so that it can initially be considered by the General Assembly around that time through an appropriate mechanism. The ideal period of coverage of the report should be a calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December. Updating the report could be accomplished by regular issuance of special reports throughout the year. This would address the issues of outdated and incomplete information made available to the Assembly in the annual report or in preceding special reports.

My delegation is open to other and perhaps more detailed suggestions to improve the Council's report. We look forward to a fruitful exchange of views on this subject during our debate which, I reiterate, could provide a useful framework for further consideration of this subject, particularly by the informal open-ended working group on the revitalization of the General Assembly.

Mr. KHOSHROO (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today, the General Assembly is meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. My delegation has reviewed the report contained in document A/48/2, covering the period from 16 June 1992 to 15 June 1993, and it is with a sense of satisfaction that we note that, for the first time, it was considered and adopted in a public meeting of the Security Council. We also welcome the timely submission of the current report to the General Assembly. Indeed, these are steps in the right direction, considering the views that were expressed following the release of the previous report of the Security Council.

It is obvious that in the wake of the cold war the Security Council has expanded its activities. A quantitative comparison of the work-load of the Council from June 1992 to June 1993 with the period of its previous report, June 1991 to June 1992, clearly demonstrates that the number of meetings, resolutions and presidential statements of the earlier period has now almost doubled. Obviously, the Security Council, as a principal organ of the United Nations entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, needs to make every effort to adapt itself to the new international circumstances.

Bearing in mind the general principle of the accountability of the principal organs of the United Nations to the entire membership, as embodied in the General Assembly, we believe that the more the Security Council expands its activities the more accountable it needs to be to the general membership, as stipulated in Article 24 of the Charter. In this way it can meet the international community's expectations of it.

The greater role and expanded agenda of the Security Council, as perceived in the new international era, should be commensurate with the degree of trust and confidence shown by the international community in the Council's performance. Indeed, the prospect of such a greater role and expanded agenda would be frightening if an equally energetic process of Security Council responsiveness and accountability to the general membership, as well as transparency in its work, did not take root in the Council, particularly among the permanent members. The Islamic Republic of Iran is concerned with undemocratic practices, hidden agendas, lack of transparency and the indifference of the Security Council to the views of the international community as they are crystallized in the General Assembly.

Needless to say, any lack of transparency in the work of the Council runs contrary to the spirit of openness and democracy within the United Nations system. In this regard the Islamic Republic of Iran concurs with the Secretary-General's view that

> "Informal consultations should be punctuated by more formal meetings in order both to inform, and to seek support from, the wider circle of Member States". (*A/48/1, para. 38*)

In fact, as an overwhelming majority of Member States have observed in the course of the general debate in this body, democratization of the Security Council and insurance of transparency in its activities are of paramount importance in enhancing the credibility of the United Nations system. In this context I cannot but stress that an annual report of the Security Council characterized by a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the issues on its agenda and of the approaches used by the Security Council to address matters of substance could only contribute to enhancing the transparency of the Council's work. It is unfortunate that the present annual report, like earlier ones, is characterized merely by symbols, resolutions and chronologies of issues and fails to address any matters of substance.

If the credibility of the United Nations system, particularly in the crucial areas of peace and security is to be enhanced, it is also imperative to reconsider the Council's behaviour and approach in dealing with cases of aggression and threats to international peace and security. In this connection, like many other Member States, we have on numerous occasions expressed our deep concern at the selective approaches and double standards pursued by the Council. The most distinctive example in this regard is the attitude of the Security Council with respect to the tragedy in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is clear that, in spite of the magnitude of Serbian crimes and acts of aggression against a Member State, the Security Council has failed to act resolutely to redress this tragic situation. Indeed, had the Council abandoned its double standard and acted decisively when the Serbs started their aggression, we would not be facing a continuation of the abhorrent policy and legitimization of "ethnic cleansing".

In conclusion, it is our hope that the flaws in the work of the Security Council, some of which I have highlighted, will be removed so as to strengthen cooperation between the principal organs of the United Nations and to enable the General Assembly, as the supreme organ of the United Nations, thoroughly to assess the reports of the Council and make recommendations to it.

Mr. TELLO (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the General Assembly is meeting today to consider the annual report of the Security Council. My delegation is pleased that the report has been submitted in a timely fashion, and we wish to state for the record our appreciation to Ambassador Sardenberg, Permanent Representative of Brazil and President of the Security Council, for his decision to present the report personally. We understand that this is the first time this has been done, and we therefore congratulate him for having initiated a practice we hope to see continued in the future. It is also encouraging that the report was adopted at an open meeting of the Council. My delegation also notes the improvements that have been made in some aspects of the Council's methods of work. Progress is thus being achieved in making the work of that important United Nations body more transparent.

I must, however, note that a great deal must still be accomplished. The Council's annual report is still the formal expression of an obligation. The document before us still lacks the kind of analysis that would enable the Assembly to understand the underpinnings of the actions the Council has taken. The General Assembly is still not in a position fully to carry out the functions assigned it by the Charter.

Age-old problems have been compounded by the realities that have emerged since the end of the cold war. In recent years we have seen the number of items on the Security Council's agenda grow. The Council is asked to seek solutions to conflicts in every part of the world. In this new situation it would seem logical and natural for the States Members of the Organization to be increasingly interested in the Council's work, in its methods of work and in the bases for its decisions.

Over 70 Member States responded to the inquiry on the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". The fact that a large majority of States also referred to the Council's methods of work reflects the importance we attach to knowing and understanding its work. In other words, it seems clear that that work is not and cannot be limited to an exercise in numerical microsurgery.

We must go forward in the task of making the work of the Council more transparent and democratic. Procedural changes have already been suggested that would require no structural, legal or rule-related reforms. One positive innovation is the distribution of a provisional forecast of the programme of work, which has enabled Member States to know what items the Security Council will be dealing with each month.

Other measures could be taken to keep all Members of the Organization informed of the items considered in the Council's informal consultations. In our view, Members need a summary of what is considered in those consultations. It would be very useful for the *Journal* to announce the items to be considered at those meetings.

Like other Member States, Mexico referred in its response to the inquiry concerning representation on the Security Council to the need for the Council's annual report to be analytical in nature; I reiterate that now. We indicated that it would be appropriate for the Council to submit substantive quarterly reports, without prejudice to the submission of the special reports envisioned in the Charter; this would strengthen its links with the Assembly. Mexico also proposed the appointment of a special Security Council rapporteur to be entrusted with providing Member States with timely information on the work of the Council.

We appreciate the determination and the efforts of Council members over recent months to modernize their working methods. We urge them to persevere and to go further in that direction.

It is essential that the annual report of the Security Council no longer be a matter of mere protocol. It is no accident that the Council's obligation to submit reports for consideration by the General Assembly is set out specifically in Article 24 of the Charter. We, the Members of the United Nations, have conferred on the Security Council the primary - not the exclusive - responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security; this means that the Council has a responsibility to the General Assembly.

We hope that in the near future we will see substantive, analytical reports on the activities and endeavours of the Security Council. The maintenance of international peace and security is first and foremost a common purpose of the United Nations, and the General Assembly is the centre for its attainment.

Mr. COLLINS (Ireland): Our task here today is to receive and consider the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly for the period 16 June 1992 to 15 June 1993. My delegation would like to acknowledge the extensive nature of the report. It is especially important that the report has been submitted on time this year. My delegation has previously made the point that, while the report is a compendium, such a compendium is in itself a very useful contribution to keeping the general membership informed of the activities of the Security Council.

There has been an increasing demand by the general membership of the United Nations for transparency in relation to the work of the Security Council. That demand is a consequence of and is especially relevant in the light of the increase in the work and activity of the Security Council in the past three years. A beginning in transparency has been made in this respect by the adoption in the present report of proposals in relation to the format. The proposals were adopted by the Security Council on 30 June 1993 and are contained in document S/26015. They are somewhat mechanical and bureaucratic in nature. They involve the easier retrieval of information through more extensive indexing and cross-referencing. Nevertheless, they represent a commitment to, and a step in the process of, transparency. My delegation would like to acknowledge the efforts which have been made in this respect.

In our examination of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, it is important to realize that the submission of an annual report on the work of the Security Council is a counterpart to the power invested in the Security Council by the general membership and, for want of a better word, an accounting by the Security Council to the general membership on how it has fulfilled its responsibility on behalf of that general membership, in carrying out the task of maintaining international peace and security.

The report also reflects, by its sheer volume, the vastly increased workload which the Security Council has had to undertake in recent years. This in turn reflects the increased role of the United Nations generally and the greater expectations the international community places in the Security Council in relation to peace-keeping and peacemaking.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the delegations of both permanent members and the non-permanent members that have served on the Security Council in the past year for their commitment and dedication.

The delegations assembled in this Hall are familiar with the statistics in relation to the dramatic increase in the number of formal Security Council meetings, especially in the past two years, as compared to the relatively few meetings in the past. For example, roughly one third of the total number of resolutions adopted by the Security Council since 1945 have been adopted in the past three years. In the period covered by the report, the Security Council held 151 meetings; it adopted 80 resolutions and issued 96 presidential statements. Inevitably, such a workload has led to new methods of work. As the representative of Brazil said in the debate on the previous report to the General Assembly on 22 June 1993, the Security Council's new methods of work have evolved in response to force of circumstances and therefore are not the result of long-term institutional planning. It would be unfair not to acknowledge that the dramatically increased workload has created a new situation for the members of the Security Council. It would be equally unfair not to acknowledge that it has created a new situation for those States which are not members of the Security Council.

In particular, there has been a vertiginous increase in the amount of time devoted to informal consultations amongst members of the Council. It is clear that the Security Council needs to have a facility for confidential discussions and that informal consultations represent one method of achieving this. However, the extent of informal consultations and the lack of a mechanism for transparent dialogue between the membership of the General Assembly and the members of the Security Council in relation to informal consultations have become matters of serious concern to the membership at large.

The authority and legitimacy of Security Council decisions do not derive from the Council itself; they derive from the fact that the Council, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, acts on behalf of the general membership. The general membership has committed itself to support and carry out those decisions. If the general membership is to do so, with public support - especially in cases where such decisions have serious political and economic consequences for the peoples represented by the general membership or have to be implemented or enforced - it is essential that those we represent should feel that their voice is heard at the decision-making table. That means that there must be considerably more openness and transparency in decision-making. Otherwise, public support for the Security Council's activities will not be forthcoming. In practical terms, what is needed now is a mechanism whereby the general membership is informed about and is enabled to have an input where necessary in the informal consultation procedure.

The Charter, as I have observed, requires that an annual report on the work of the Security Council be not merely submitted. It requires that such a report be considered by the General Assembly. The report before us is, above all, of course, an extensive and, unfortunately, a depressing list of the failure of human beings to live in peace and harmony in various parts of the globe. It is a salutary reminder that we are dealing literally with people's lives and, all too frequently, with the deaths of innocent people and of those who endeavour to assist them in keeping the peace.

The situations listed in the report are all worthy of consideration and attention by the General Assembly. The report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is a means by which the general membership can take specific note of these situations and make manifest the concern of the General Assembly in relation to them. If my delegation chooses to mention very briefly our preoccupations in relation to only two of those situations listed in the report, rather than to all of the serious issues raised in it, it is for reasons of time and because of concern about immediate events.

We have read reports today of a further horrifying massacre in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I should like to take this opportunity to say that my delegation hopes that those responsible can be found and made to answer for their crimes.

The Security Council will begin the process of examining renewal of the mandate in relation to the United Nations operation in Somalia in the next few days. It is therefore appropriate that we should make our concerns on this issue known. My delegation has repeatedly expressed the view that political reconciliation and national reconstruction must form the priority objectives for the United Nations mission in Somalia. We know that the United Nations shares this view and that, through the efforts of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), the process of political reconciliation and national reconstruction is now well established in that country. It is our earnest hope that the events of recent days in Mogadishu will not result in any departure from the efforts now under way to achieve a peaceful resolution of Somalia's problems.

Finally, my delegation hopes that some of the suggestions made here today in relation to the Security Council report will be adopted when preparing the next report by the Security Council to the General Assembly.

Mrs. HASSAN (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic):* The delegation of Egypt wishes to extend, at the outset, its thanks and appreciation to the Ambassador of Brazil, as President of the Council, for his submission of the report under consideration (A/48/2).

The delegation of Egypt attaches special importance to the annual debate conducted by the General Assembly in considering the report of the Security Council submitted to it in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. We view this as an opportunity for all Member States of the United Nations to exchange views on the work of the Council, to note its achievements, and to get to know its limitations. Moreover, in discussing the Council's report, the General Assembly performs an aspect of its role in the area of maintaining international peace and security, since the Security Council's report to the General Assembly expresses the accountability of the Council *vis-à-vis* the General Assembly and reflects the necessary and vital balance between the two major organs of the Organization in harmoniously discharging their responsibilities.

The increasing importance of the Security Council over the past few years, reflected in the intensification of its work and the frequency of its meetings, together with the diverse nature of its responsibilities, have combined in creating a new situation which makes it imperative that the General Assembly should acquaint itself with all the Security Council's activities and tasks.

While the delegation of Egypt welcomes the submission of the Council's report to the General Assembly for this year, it wishes to point out that the timely submission of the said report is a basic responsibility that ought to be respected as it stems from the representative nature of the Council and the mandate entrusted to its members by the Member States of the Organization in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 and the requirements of Article 15 of the Charter.

On the other hand, the increase in the activities of the Security Council, and the increased frequency of its meetings which follow upon one another, lead the members of the international community to expect that the Council should report to them on all developments relating to international peace and security in a manner that focuses on reviewing those developments both analytically and comprehensively, so that the General Assembly may be able to analyse the report's contents and to take the appropriate decisions accordingly.

Unfortunately, the report of the Security Council now under review is a conform copy of last year's report (A/47/2). Its contents are the resolutions adopted and the statements made over the period covered by the report whereas all such resolutions and statements are items of public record which everyone has read before. The inclusion of such material has not been accompanied by any explanations or assessments or mention of the grounds upon which it was based. The style of the report is merely descriptive and does not allow of any analysis of the activities of the Council.

My delegation had hoped that the members of the Security Council would seriously consider the numerous proposals that were put forward earlier, when we were discussing the report last year, and that they would pay due attention to those proposals. It was expected that the report would include adequate analysis of the grounds upon which the Council performed its activities, so that the General Assembly may be able to consider scrupulously the reasons behind the Council's important resolutions. The report is also devoid of any reference to the work of its subsidiary organs, whose work is so important to a number of United Nations Members. Moreover, the report does not include the topics relating to peace-keeping operations. These are all questions that, because of their importance for and impact upon a large number of delegations, cannot be overlooked in any report that would rightly reflect the work of the Security Council.

Regarding the procedural aspects of the Council's activities, it is very important for Egypt to stress the need for the Council to increase transparency in its work. In contrast to certain views, we do not see any contradiction at all between enhancing the efficiency of the Security Council and increasing transparency in its work. If informal consultations are considered to be a flexible and useful mechanism, whereby the members of the Council have an opportunity to determine areas of agreement and to overcome differences amongst themselves, there is still a dire need for the non-members of the Security Council to know what goes on in terms of activities performed in the Council on behalf of all the Members of the Organization. If, in all honesty, we have to admit that there has been positive movement in that direction, in so far as there has been a degree of consultation with non-members in the Council regarding matters that concern them, in addition to the issuance at the beginning of every month, of a list of matters of which the Council is seized, a practice which we encourage, yet we have to say that this is an area which, in our view, has not received the attention it deserves regardless of the numerous proposals that have been put forward. For instance, it was proposed earlier that a resumé of informal consultations by Security Council members on the subjects under discussion be circulated. Also, the possibility of appointing a special rapporteur to provide information on the work of the Council has been discussed. Mexico did present a proposal in that regard last year. In addition, there has been discussion of the possibility of using the Security Council's report to the General Assembly as a means of filling the existing gap and of overcoming present limitations.

It is worth mentioning in this respect that those proposals include the practical means of providing Members of the United Nations with information and would not entail any structural or legal amendments.

The Security Council, in carrying out the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security does so in the name of all Member States of the United Nations. This mandate cannot have any real meaning unless the Member States feel that they are party to the decisions the Council makes on their behalf. Consequently, enhancing the efficiency of the Council's performance as well as the legitimacy of its activities, requires us to consider the ways and means whereby complementarily between the work of the General Assembly and the Security Council may be achieved.

We believe that drawing up the report of the Security Council to the Assembly in an analytical manner to reflect the Council's work, in addition to providing more information on the work of the Council to the Organization's Members, would definitely have positive effects. Moreover, the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security is not the Council's alone; the General Assembly has a similar responsibility in this area under Articles 10 and 14 of the Charter.

Furthermore, the close interrelationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in terms of the procedures for peace-keeping operations requires further reflection on what might be the best way of achieving a constructive and constant dialogue between the Council and the Assembly. We consider that the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is the most important means of doing just that.

In conclusion, it is high time we seriously rethought this important question. The report, in its present form, does not fulfil the purpose for which it was intended. If we are calling for reform and revitalization of the United Nations in a number of areas, in order to enhance the Organization's efficiency so that it may be able to deal with the many challenges it faces, then reform and revitalization should be applied - at the very least - to the Council's report to the Assembly.

The report should be revitalized both in form and content so that it may evolve from a mere routine procedure into a mechanism that would contribute to the achievement of the desired goals in consonance with the Charter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.